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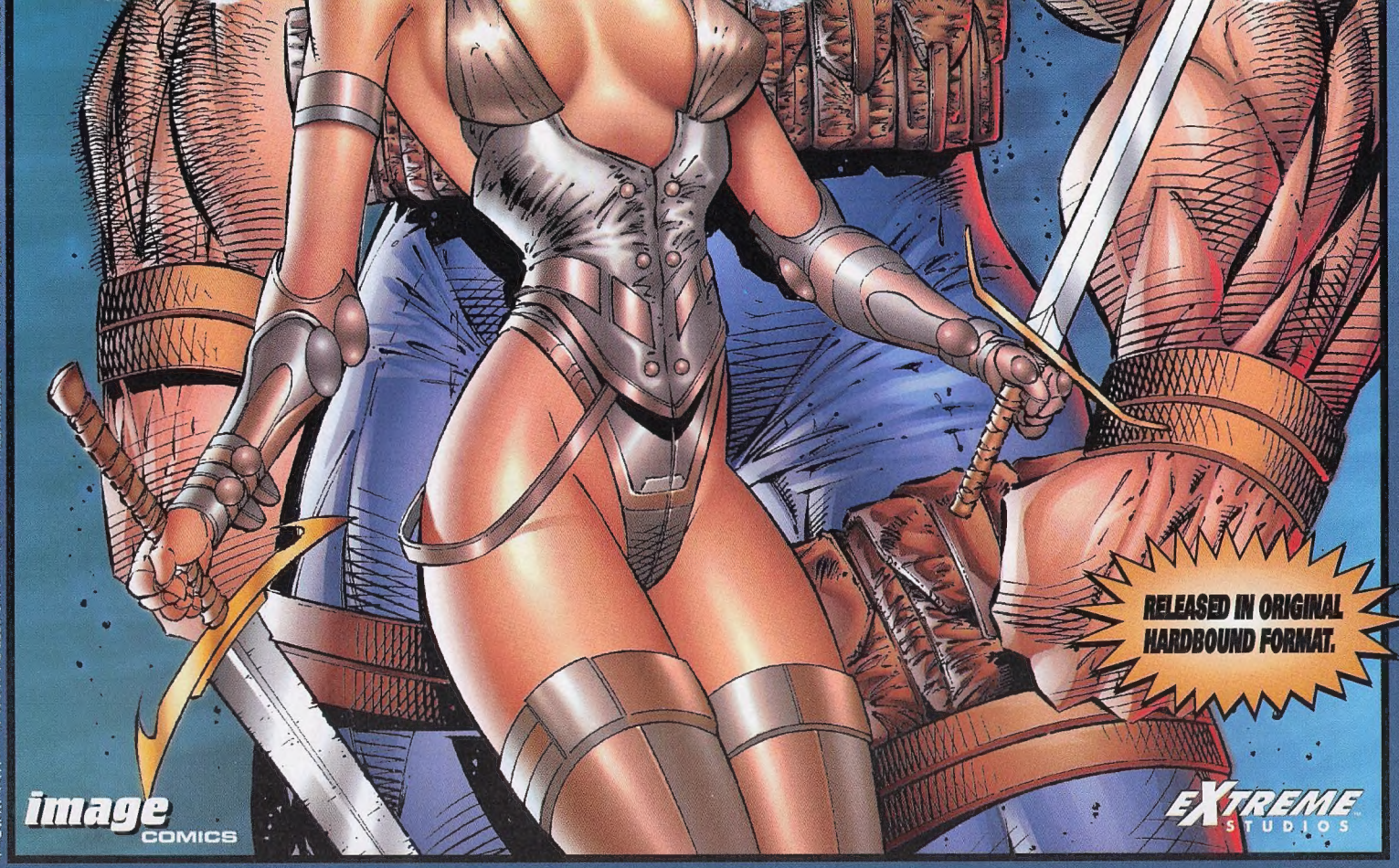

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A COMMON BELIEF IN A HIGHER POWER UNITES THEM AGAINST A DEADLY FOE.

Rob Liefeld **Stephen Platt** **Mike Deodato, Jr.**

WIZARD®

Number 52
DECEMBER 1995

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DENY EVERYTHING? NOT US. THE *X-FILES* SCOOP. PAGE 36

PHOTO: KEN STANIFORTH/FOX

PHOTO: BOB MARTIN

PHOTO: CARLO ALLEGRE

BOO!

TRICK-OR-TREAT WITH LADY DEATH!

Win an incredible trip to Arizona to crash the annual Chaos! Comics Halloween party! So many freaks, so little time! Run to page **42** right now!

departments chainsaws

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"OKAY, THE SHOOT'S OVER, YOU GUYS CAN LET ME GO NOW...GUYS? HELLO? COME ON! UNTIE ME!"

YOU CAN'T HANDLE THE TRUTH!

When I heard we were doing a major feature on *The X-Files* TV show, I was really hesitant. I know the TV show is hot and the comic book is selling well, but I really wasn't a fan of the show myself. But, in the final analysis, I know people really liked *X-Files*. Unfortunately, I never really gave the show a good shot (I'm usually out partying in New York City on Friday nights!), and most of the *Wizard* office really likes it, so I thought, "What the heck." Anyway, I really hope you like it. In the end, I think it came out great.

In the Dale Keown article, you'll notice something very startling, even I was stunned...Dale got a *major* haircut. When the pictures came in, I didn't even know it was him. Well, *Pitt* has always been a favorite of mine, so you better like it.

You have sent in some awesome Halloween costume pictures—I could never dress up like a freak or a superhero (well maybe The Hulk—which isn't a far stretch for me). Check it out, they're cool.

You'll also notice an amazing new toy price guide this month. We've spent months putting this together and it will be here every month from now on.

Now for my monthly shameless plugs...Check out our "Wizard World" forum on America Online—we've got lots of pictures you've never seen before, and you get to talk to lots of people who love comics as much as you do. And December will be the month the Bad Girls of comics really come alive in a special tribute issue produced by us—make sure you check it out.

See ya next month for our huge year-end blow out issue!

Later,

Gareb S. Shamus
Publisher
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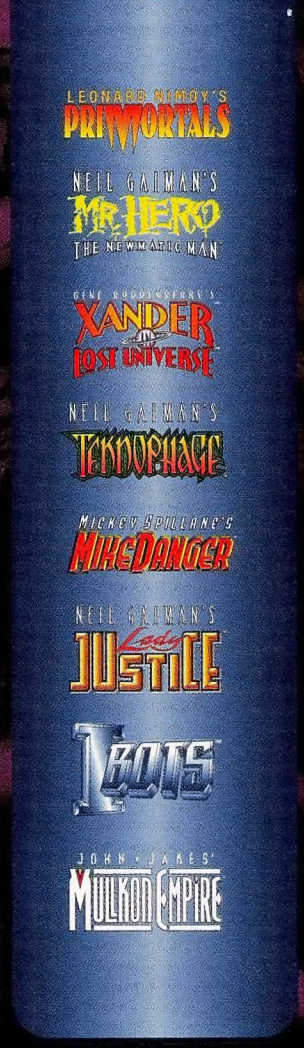

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MAGIC WORDS

Get Ready for the Hate!

This month's mail included the biggest batch of angst-ridden missives that I've seen in 20 months-worth of "Magic Words." Everyone has an ax to grind and I'm not sure why. Maybe it's the residual effect of the summer heat. Maybe it's the back-to-school blues. Maybe there's just a worldwide surplus of starch in everyone's grundys. Like I say, I just don't know.

And it's not like I just picked letters from a bunch of angry young geeks, either. Believe it or not, I always try to make this column a true representative sample of all the letters we receive in any given month. So watch out—there's a lot of anger in the letters ahead. Let's be careful out there.

On the Other Hand...

Hi, Y'all at Wizard,

Enclosed is a hug for Jim. Don't worry, I'm over 18.

Kristin Kelly
Dallas, TX

Well, there's a curveball to start us out—a ray of love in a column of hate. This must be a response to the tagline that ran at the end of "Magic Words" in issue #48. I got a lot of mail-in hugs and I'd like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who sent one in, while also reminding any federal authorities who may be reading this column that I accepted only the ones that came from consenting adults age 18 and over.

We now return to our regularly scheduled hate.

Creator's Rights: Champs or Chumps?

To Whom it May Concern,

Lately we've all been treated to talk from Frank Miller in both his *Sin City* letters page as well as in Dark Horse editorials about how Marvel Comics is the scourge of the galaxy and the greatest evil since disco. Well, I didn't buy it from the overpaid whiners in baseball, and I'm not buying it from Frank Miller either.

As a life-long fan of comics as an artistic medium for storytelling both intellectual and escapist, I have to wonder how long the fans will listen to all these agenda-driven, back-biting whiners that the majority of comic creators have proven themselves to be.

If it isn't the unfathomably ignorant Todd McFarlane dragging his knuckles over a typewriter to produce a column created solely to secure his relationship with said column's publisher, it's Frank Miller wielding his big club in the incessant bashing of Marvel, while still occasionally producing work for them for a high rate of pay.

Let me first say that I am a big fan of Mr. Miller's work and that I agree with his stance on a creator's right to a character he creates if he has the means to retain the rights. If so, then more power to him. He should be proud.

However, if a person creates a character in a work-for-hire situation knowing full well that he retains no rights, then he has no reason to piss and moan about it. If you can't take the heat...

The injustices of the work-for-hire atmosphere of the past were tragic, but if anyone thinks that the Big Two will ever start returning character rights to the character's original creators, they are dreaming. This is an age of hero comics where almost every Image character can be traced back to its Marvel roots. This is a market which caters to the egos of "creators" by rewarding them with mounds of speculator-dollars and publications like *Wizard* that heap praise and media exposure on the semi-talented who have taken this sequential art form of many possibilities and reduced it to a series of poster-books full of knock-off posers for the next generation.

Why should we as fans get behind an argument for what has become an increasingly incestuous creative pool of arrogant, overpaid whiners?

Why would I care to hear the childish crying about deadlines by artists who bitch about work-for-hire, yet when they publish their work themselves, end up putting out erratic and incomprehensible wastes of paper knocked off from one of the Big Two and produced by others *they've* hired to write and draw?

Why should I care about helping to advance the careers of those who perpetuate the practices they purport to hold in contempt? Because what's good for creators is good for comics?

Bull! Only a handful of creators have proven capable of performing all of the aspects of comics storytelling. Most need to collaborate to achieve full characterization. In short, they must *hire* someone to write, draw, letter or color. Unfortunately, not enough of those in need wind up hiring an editor.

Apparently all this fuss about creator's rights

THESE LETTERS ARE GUARANTEED HAND-PICKED FOR FRESHNESS

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is mostly about money. Am I the only one who's noticed that comics were at their best when the pay was lousy, just like in baseball? Thank God there isn't a Comics Players Association or we'd see even more .270 hitters like Rob Liefeld and Erik Larsen making mega-bucks and producing trogloditic trash.

For all the talk about past moral and ethical injustices, it's all about the money, isn't it? I know it is, because if their fondest creations failed to generate cash, they'd drop them like a bad habit.

Marvel comics are not the only comics I buy. They are *some* of the comics I buy. I buy the publications of seven or eight different publishers a month, both creator- and corporate-owned because as a fan, I buy what I like and not what is the "politically correct" comic to buy. The fact that a comic is creator-owned doesn't count for squat or necessarily make it better. Just because Frank Miller says that Marvel's comics are lousy doesn't make it so. Considering the large amount of money he was willing to accept for *Man Without Fear* last year—and the fact that he has yet to say that he will no longer accept royalties from or work for the "evil" that is Marvel—I don't think Frank Miller is one to talk.

I'm sure Mr. Miller will strike back with some "tough" comment about the ocean-like depths of my ignorance or the like. But I'd rather be ignorant than a hypocrite and a whiner.

Frank Miller would have been a natural at baseball.

Mark Bittmann
Riverside, CA

Eeeeooowww! Feel the hate a-comin' off that letter! All of a sudden (check out "Magic Words" from the last few issues), it seems like Frank Miller has become the most controversial guy in comics.

You raise a few good points, Mark. Just because a comic is creator-owned doesn't necessarily make it better. It doesn't necessarily make it worse, either. And there does seem to be a certain "PC" snobbery among people who make a point to tell you that they buy certain creator-owned titles.

But the big point to me is the fact that many of these "champions of creator's rights" do wind up becoming that which they say they despise—they wind up becoming the owner and they then hire others to work on their properties. A lot of creators have gone this route already, although I would quickly point out that Frank Miller is not among them.

All Slut or All Art?

Dear Magic Words,

I have been made fun of many times and called a pervert because I read *Vengeance of Vampirella* and *Lady Death*. People say I only read them because they feature scantily-clad women with...ummm...rather noticeable assets. People also say I get them for the potential these

THE BUNNY AWARD

be afraid

Paul Schiraldi

Jim takes one of his favorite letters of the month and spotlights it here. There's no logic attached to this nor is there a prize.

The Simian Asphyxiator?

Mr. McLauchlin,

I was aghast to see in *Wizard* #48's "Top 10 Superhero names that haven't been used yet" that Keep-Squeezin'-Them-Monkeys Lad was the victim of such childish and misguided humor. As one of the longest enduring characters in comic history, he deserves your respect.

Wait, I'm overstepping my bounds. You see, he hasn't actually been in any comics at all, but he was almost the greatest character ever.

Keep-Squeezin'-Them-Monkeys Lad was a creation of the late Walt Disney. As a young cartoonist, Walt drew a weekly strip whose cast included an ensemble of primates which 'Laddie would squeeze for no apparent reason. There was a dispute over the moral content of the strip, and it was eventually discontinued. Later, Walt traded the character to a young Stan Lee in exchange for a sketch of a rodent known then only as "Mickey."

Stan was delighted to finally gain possession of one of his beloved favorites, and began scripting Keep-Squeezin'-Them-Monkeys Lad into early issues of The Amazing Spider-Man and X-Men. Steve Ditko and Jack Kirby refused to draw the character in, but the Keep-Squeezin'-Them-Monkeys Lad scripts continued to pour from Lee's hands. The conflict between writer and artists escalated and eventually resulted in an unfortunate incident involving three gallons of orange juice, a Chihuahua and a weed-whacker.

"It was horrible," lamented Ditko. Stan Lee concurred: "The most terrible thing I've ever seen." Keep-Squeezin'-Them-Monkeys Lad was sold to DC Comics.

"Not really," said DC Editor Dick Giordano. "Not sold so much as given. They gave us the character. We didn't really want him either, but we had him now. I posted his specs on the office wall. I figured if someone was interested, they would take him."

Little did Giordano know, someone was interested. "He was pretty neat looking," said writer/artist John Byrne. "I wanted to expand on his personality. Get some sympathy for him. I mean, why does he squeeze monkeys? Does he hate them? Does he hate primates in general, or just monkeys? I figured with a little tweaking, he would fit perfectly with the new Superman history I was writing."

Unfortunately, Byrne's idea was shot down and Keep-Squeezin'-Them-Monkeys Lad was replaced by Metallo. Somehow, in the corporate shuffle after "Zero Hour," K-S-T-M Lad was lost. He eventually resurfaced at Image Comics, playing an integral part in *Deathmate*.

"Well, no," said Jim Lee. "He wasn't actually in it. But he should have been."

Regardless, Jim Lee has promised to place Keep-Squeezin'-Them-Monkeys Lad in a prominent role in upcoming WildStorm comics. "He'll be really important," said Lee. "I mean it. Hey, why does he squeeze these monkeys, anyway?"

So you see, Keep-Squeezin'-Them-Monkeys Lad is an established character with a past and present and future. I know someday the simian asphyxiator will grow in popularity to epic proportions.

Royal McGraw
Athens, GA

It just goes to show you that Sir Isaac Newton was right: For every action, there is a reaction. We cap on Keep-Squeezin'-Them-Monkeys Lad and we get a nasty letter. We heartily apologize for this obvious blunder.

I'm just glad we didn't get any letters about Mr. It-Hurts-When-I-Pee.

comics have to go up in value.

What I have to say about this is that it is total bull! I buy them because they have good stories and art. I do admit, the other reasons did play a minuscule part in why I started to read them. But if I read comics only for the women, wouldn't I also read practically every Image book out there? Well, I don't. I only read two Image books regularly, one of which is *Team 7*. Not too many women there. I also read *Vanguard*, which has no super-babes in tight spandex to be found.

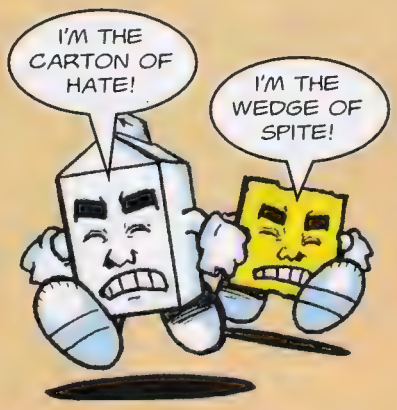
The only reason I read *Vengeance of Vampirella* and *Lady Death* are because they have awesome stories by Tom Sniegoski and Brian Pulido, and they have awesome art by Kevin Sharpe and Steven Hughes. I'll bet that half of the comic fans that pass judgment on these books have never even read them. They probably just look at the lead character and think "slut" or "all art, but no story." Well, these people are dead wrong. Neither Vampirella nor Lady Death go around trying to pick up guys. They don't just wear those skimpy costumes to impress guys. They wear them for a very good reason, and while I'm not sure what that reason is, I'm sure it's good.

Sam Kuntz
Colorado Springs, CO

This might be the stupidest conclusion to a letter I've ever read. You really lost me there at the end, Sammy-boy. Things were going well until you hit that last sentence, and then—BAM!—brick wall time. Sixty to zero in no time flat.

Let me reinforce a point here on behalf of our friend with no closure. Comics like* Vengeance of Vampirella *and* Lady Death *are just the bee's knees to some people. And they're nothing special at all to many others. I hear a fair amount of praise for the talents of people like the above-mentioned Messrs. Sniegoski and Pulido. I also hear lots of people who dismiss the whole silly "Bad Girl" motif on basic principle alone. One way or the other, many people are judging these books by their covers. You probably should take the time to read one or two and get an informed opinion before you decide to pass judgment. Know what's going on. You'll be all the wiser. Then feel free to rail away on 'em if you don't like 'em.

Geez, I think all the hate is starting to get to me.



Lactose Intolerants

Dear Comic Know-It-Alls,

I recently got an issue of *Milk and Cheese* numbered #666. I find Milk and Cheese incredibly funny, as most of my friends do. Unfortunately, this is the only issue that I have. I'd just like to know how long *Milk and Cheese* has been out and if this is really the 666th issue, or just something to make this book a little bit cooler.

E. Jay Apaga
Annandale, VA

It's actually the sixth book. The first five issues were entitled* Milk and Cheese #1, Milk and Cheese's Other #1, Milk and Cheese's Third #1, Milk and Cheese's Fourth #1 *and* Milk and Cheese's First Second Issue. *Why the funky numbering? It might be something to make the book cooler, or it might just mean that Milk and Cheese creator Evan Dorkin has never been too good at math.

Jim's a Deceiving Jerk

Dear Jim,

I just wanted to inform you that Demogoblin was not one of the doppelgangers created by the Magus during the pitiful *Infinity War* crossover, as you stated in *Wizard* #48. Back in *Spectacular Spider-Man* #147, Jason Macendale, the second Hobgoblin, offered to give his soul to the demon N'astirh in exchange for demonic power. N'astirh refused the offer, but granted Macendale the powers anyway. Later, in *Web of Spider-Man* #86, Macendale was separated from his demonic persona. This demon persona became known as the Demogoblin and vowed to kill Macendale. I hope this helps to clear up any confusion among any readers.

Thanks for your time.

Andrius Schmid
Chicago, IL

Righty you are. I stand corrected. And just to tie up that last loose end, let the record show that Jason Macendale eventually killed the Demogoblin.

A Trio of Brains in a Galaxy Far, Far Away

Dear Star Trek Hater,

You suck! I am writing this letter in response to a letter submitted to "Magic Words" in issue #48 by David Nguyen. He thinks *Star Wars* is great and further said, "'Star Trek' sucks sour frog ass." Nothing could be further from the truth! Gene Roddenberry was a science fiction god! The Star Wars movies were some of the worst movies I have ever seen. What was with those names? Skywalker? Jabba the Hutt? And you, Jim McLauchlin, are just as bad as this Nguyen freak. You will all burn in Hell!

Dante Espinoza
San Diego, CA

Like I said, it's a hateful month. Let's try this one more time, and a little more reasonable, if you please. Next!

Dear Wizard Guys,

In issue #48, David Nguyen said that "Star Trek" sucks and *Star Wars* rules. He then compares "Star Trek" to *Star Wars*. Hmmm. Let's review...

The Star Wars "world" is made up of two trilogies—one in the books and one in the movies. On the other hand, "Star Trek" is comprised of over 325 TV episodes, 7 movies and much more storylines. To prove my claim, let's examine each on the following points:

Launch: *Star Wars* started with a book which later became a trilogy in the 1970s. "Star Trek" started as a television series which premiered in 1966. "Star Trek" has been around longer.

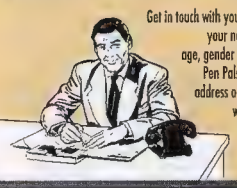
Past: Starting in 1977, George Lucas spawned three feature films, each released in three-year intervals. In the meantime, the Trekkers have released six feature films (the first of which appeared in 1979), and have also unleashed the "Star Trek: The Next Generation" TV series which started in 1987 and aired for seven years. And don't forget the crossover feature film *Generations*.

Present: *Star Wars* is nowhere to be seen. But "Star Trek" is releasing its first "Next Generation" film. Also, the "Star Trek: Deep Space 9" and "Star Trek: Voyager" TV series have just been born.

Future: No word from *Star Wars*. Meanwhile, "Star Trek" is yet to explore either "DS9" or "Voyager." Also, more films are on the way.

Don't get me wrong. I do not dislike *Star*

Hey! It's Pen Pals



Get in touch with your fellow comic fans! Send your name, address, age, gender and three favorite titles to Pen Pals, c/o the Magic Words address on page 14. **NOTE:** Please write your **age** clearly on the envelope. Hey, make a friend!

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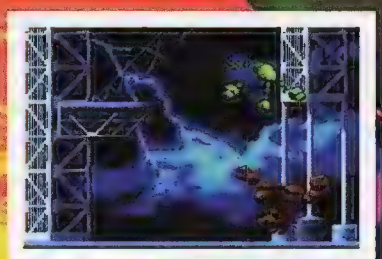

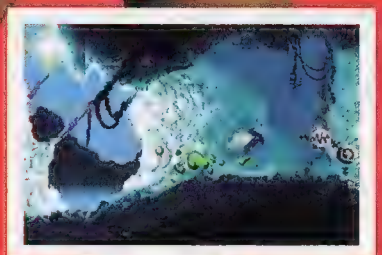

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VECTORMAN

No purchase required. You can also participate by sending in a 3x5 card with your hand- printed name, address, age and phone number to "Sega Play-To-Win Contest" PO Box 7531 Melville, NY 11775-7531. Entries must be postmarked by 6/30/96 and received by 7/31/96. Void where prohibited. 101 prizes available. Individual odds of winning: $25,000 Grand Prize - 1/515,000; $10,000 1st Prize - 1/51,500; Sega Saturn - 1/5,722. All prize claims are subject to verification. Total prize value: $160,910. Prizes won by minors will be awarded to winner's parent or legal guardian. Sega will reimburse verified winners for phone tolls made to the secret phone number. Sweepstakes is subject to the complete official rules. For a copy of the rules send a self- addressed stamped envelope postmarked by 5/31/96 to "Sega Play-To-Win Rules" PO Box 7531 Melville, NY 11775-7531. Washington and Vermont residents omit return postage. Game ends 7/31/96.

Wars. I actually enjoy it a great deal. *Star Wars* has accomplished a lot—namely, three motion pictures that are both enjoyable and durable. But "Star Trek" has accomplished so much more.

Bobby Mehta
Carmichael, CA

I don't think you gave the Star Wars franchise full credit. They've cranked out a lot more than you mentioned, including a number of novels, comic books and even some stylish Burger King drinking glasses. 'Course, Star Trek has done the same, and they've even thrown in a handy Klingon-to-English dictionary. No argument here—"Star Trek" beats Star Wars nine ways till Tuesday in terms of pure volume. But it's really nothing to get upset over. Worry about it too much, and you might start writing letters like this next guy...

Dear Wizard,

What I'm about to say, stupid as it sounds, actually makes sense. Does anyone notice that Chewbacca the Wookiee is constantly strutting around naked? I mean, it's not like he's got a zipper on his fur coat, does he? There has to be some reason why no one in *Star Wars* notices, right? Please answer my question! If I'm right, it may be that when Chewie's standing there and he starts making those weird noises, he's actually saying, "Hey, everyone! Look at me! I'm buck naked!"

Frank Turbé
Yorktown Heights, NY

Good point. And while we're at it, why is the only article of clothing he wears that silly metal band that goes over his shoulder? What's that thing for? Is it like a utility belt? I've never seen him use it. Some seven-foot furry aliens just don't know how to accessorize.

We Looked It Up

Mx•yz•pt•l•k (miks•yeez•pit'•l•ik) *DC Universe*. 1 An impish being from the "Fifth Dimension" who goes by the name of Mister Mxyzptlk on Earth, where he constantly torments Superman with all sorts of deadly practical jokes and returns to his own dimension when he is beaten at his own game and cannot come back to Earth for at least 90 days 2 Easily the best (though far from the best dressed) supervillain on the old *Super Friends* cartoon where his name was constantly mispronounced (mitts•ul•plick)

Head...Hurt...Too... Confused...

Dear Wizard,

I don't have a question, just a simple statement to all those who read this publication: Comics are gettin' too darned complicated for my tastes! Don't get me wrong, I enjoy a crossover here, a life-altering event in a hero's life there, but come on now! I think the '90s have seen a bit too much in this particular area. I'm a tad fed up with spatial anomalies, linear disruptions, inter-company crossovers, universe-alterings, the bringing in of new characters, the killing off of older characters, the identity-realization of heroes by their enemies, the shattering of teams and formation of new teams and blah, blah, blah and sha, na, na! Geezum peegum, what the heck is going on?

I tell you, I'm afraid now to pick up an X-title or a new Superman issue. And I won't even go *near* Spider-Man anymore! Am I alone

P E N P A L S

Sol Fujiyama
Age: 16 Sex: Male
5023 Tatra Dr.
San Jose, CA 95136
Likes: *Pitt, The Maxx*, any Homage Studios comic

Laura Brown
Age: 13 Sex: Female
4008 39th St.
Lubbock, TX 79413
Likes: *X-Men, Uncanny X-Men, X-Men Adventures*

Kirk Brown
Age: 13 Sex: Male
P.O. Box 320
New Hope, AL 35760
Likes: *Spawn, Prime, Beavis & Butt-Head*

O.J. Saturley
Age: 19 Sex: Male
16019 E. Milan Dr.
Aurora, CO 80013
Likes: *Hulk*, X-titles, Spider-titles

Brian Futrill
Age: 14 Sex: Male
3907 Rolling Hills West
Lake Wales, FL 33853
Likes: *Uncanny X-Men*, Image titles, *Spider-Man*

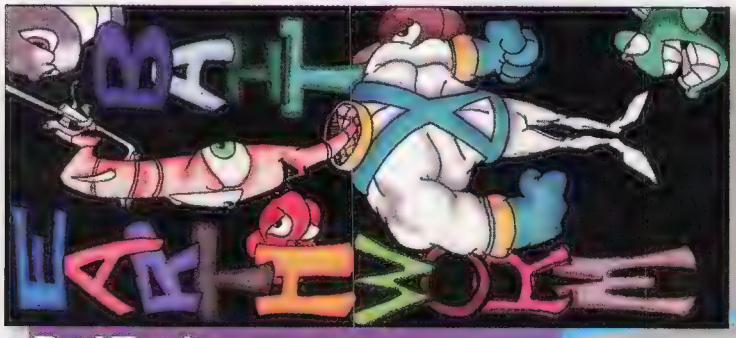
LETTER ART

Fans who get their letter art printed will each receive a copy of *Gen*[13] (mini-series) #3 signed by J. Scott Campbell, *Adventures of Superman* #0 signed by Karl Kesel, the issue of *Wizard* in which their envelope appeared signed by the entire *Wizard* creative staff, and a funky *Wizard* cap! The creator of the best envelope wins all that neat stuff, *plus* an original Silver Surfer page by Tom Grindberg! Artists: please include a clearly printed return address on the **back** of your envelope. And special thanks to Marvel Comics for donatin' that swell Grand Prize!

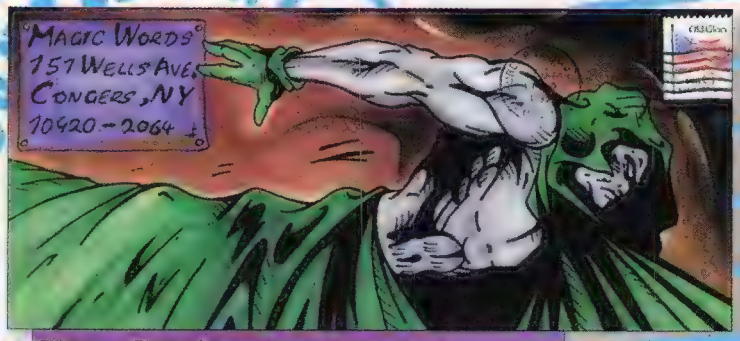
envelope of the month

Andrew Raab Webster, NY

Jason Salisbury Leaver, OR



Brad Harris Houston, TX



Shaun Jennings Norfolk, England

more letters from beyond the grave

in my thinking? Does anyone else begin to question their sanity when they delve into the current, shattered, disheveled universe that is comics?

Benjamin Michael McCarty Pistorius
Cornwall, VT

Yet another spiteful complaint letter. And yet another good point. I try to read 'em, but I'm completely lost by what's happening in the various X-titles in any given month. Kinda makes it hard to get new readers into a title if even the established geeks can't figure out what's going on.

Mutant Exercise

Dear Wizard,

What would happen if the Blob met Jenny Craig?

Greg Roques
Haraham, LA

The Blob would kick her ass.

Sucking Sour Frog Ass

Dear Wizard,

I love your mag. There is only one thing that ticks me off—your constant French-bashing. I am not the only one who thinks this way. Many of my friends are French, as am I. We will boycott your magazine if this annoying habit continues. Please stop. Your magazine is my only source of enjoyment during the summer months.

Todd Miele
Deltand, FL

Gee. A plea from a Frenchman. I'm reeeeeal sympathetic.

I was thinking about saying I was sorry and trying to kiss and make up, until I hit your last line. Fer cryin' out loud, it's summer! Get outside! Play baseball! Build a tree-fort! Just do something. Methinks you'd better find a life there, Frog-boy.

That's it. Things will be more loving next month. I promise.

Jim McLauchlin

Jim McLauchlin wants to drive the Zamboni. Yes he does.

Send letters to:
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Congers, NY 10920
or e-mail us at WizardTGTC@AOL.Com

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MARZ, WRIGHTSON

Plan Aliens/Batman Two-Shot

Godzilla's love child found in backyard in Cleveland. "I'm gonna warm up on mid-America, then it's off to Tokyo," bellowed radioactive toddler.

Captain Sucker-Punch, *world's first truly interactive comic, proves a real hit with collectors. "Ow! I swallowed my gum! I'm suing," rattled fanboy whimpered.*

Jim Lee's "sabbatical" finally ends. "I got in touch with my feminine side. Now it's back to drawing Rainmaker," said cross-dressing idol of millions.

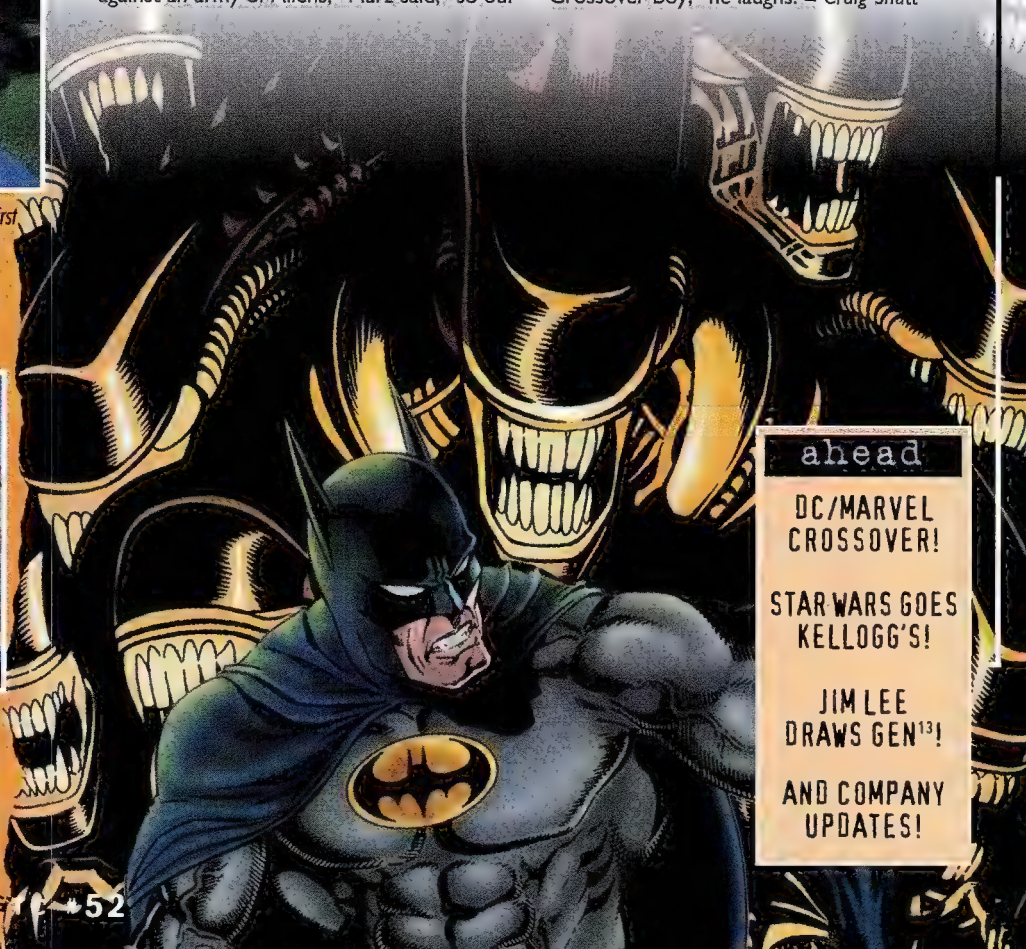
Hot on the heels of his Silver Surfer/Green Lantern crossover for Marvel and DC, writer Ron Marz is joining with artist Bernie Wrightson to create a Batman/Aliens crossover for DC and Dark Horse. The two 48-page books have not yet been scheduled but are planned for sometime in 1996.

The premise revolves around Batman and a quintet of government commandos running into each other in the Central American jungle. The Dark Knight is tracking a Wayne Tech geologist who has disappeared, while the Feds are searching for a crashed UFO. "Nobody is happy to see each other," Marz explained. "But nobody intends to leave, either."

The ship, which crashed into an ancient Mayan city, brought some Aliens with it, of course. "Obviously you can't send Batman up against an army of Aliens," Marz said, "so our story is smaller than *Superman vs. Aliens*. This will be a big, scary haunted-house story wrapped up in a monster movie. We want people to read it and say, 'This would have made a hell of a movie.'"

Marz and Wrightson produced two Aliens stories for *Dark Horse Presents* #101 and #102 as "kind of a warm-up" for the crossover, Marz said. The two also created a six-page feature for WildStorm's *Chamber of Horrors*, a 48-page Halloween special due out this month.

Marz will return to regular monthly comics soon, he vows, but next on his plate is the major four-part crossover involving the entire Marvel/DC line. (See story on page 16 for details.) He'll alternate issues with Peter David as well as write some of the books that spin out of that event. "For a while, my role is to be Crossover Boy," he laughs. ■ *Craig Shutt*



ahead

DC/MARVEL CROSSOVER!

STAR WARS GOES KELLOGG'S!

JIM LEE DRAWS GEN[13]!

AND COMPANY UPDATES!

Coming in November
LOOKS CAN KILL.
Get on the winning team or get out of the way. Jim Lee's WildC.A.T.S® are slashing their way onto the screen of your Super Nintendo Entertainment System.® You take control of Spartan,® Maul® or Warblade® in their ultimate mission against the evil Helspont and his Daemonites. Work together and the WildC.A.T.S blast through eleven worlds of tense battle and unfathomable danger. Don't, and it won't be just "looks" that kill you.
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The Battle of the Century

Marvel and DC Comics are going Hollywood together. Planet Hollywood that is.

On Wednesday, September 20, representatives from both companies were on hand at the New York City restaurant to unveil the biggest crossover to hit the comic book industry since the staple met the spine.

"We are proud to announce the largest crossover in comic book history," said Marvel Editor Mark Gruenwald. "It's called *Marvel versus DC*."

"I understand it's called *DC versus Marvel*," retorted DC Executive Editor Mike Carlin.

Actually, they're both right. As reported in *Wizard* #51's "Wizard News," *DC versus Marvel/Marvel versus DC* is a four-issue mini-series beginning in December that pits both companies' characters against one another. The crossover, co-written by Ron Marz and Peter David, penciled by Dan Jurgens and Claudio Castellini, and inked by Joe Rubinstein and Paul Neary will be 48 pages an issue at $3.95 apiece.

Amid the Harley Davidson used by Arnold Schwarzenegger in *Terminator 2* and a giant Chewbacca costume from *Star Wars*, Carlin and Gruenwald took friendly vocal jabs at one another in preparation for the big clash.

But, besides sheer curiosity from fans and creators everywhere, what could possibly pit DC's superheroes against Marvel's?

According to Carlin, "There are two cosmic entities who we postulate have not been aware of each other's existence for a long time. We figure the last time they were aware of each other, there was a big bang of sorts. So it's been awhile, and they become aware of each other. To really simplify it—this may sound corny or trite but I guarantee it's not gonna be—these two entities basically say, 'My action figures are better than your action figures.'"

Some of the neater team-ups include the Marvel and DC versions of The Scarecrow meeting and even a Perry White/J. Jonah Jameson confrontation. Out of all the fights, however, readers will get to vote on five of the outcomes: Superman/Hulk, Batman/Captain America, Wonder Woman/Storm, Lobo/Wolverine and Superboy/Spider-Man. Ballots will be available in *Wizard* #53, *DC versus Marvel* #1, packs of the SkyBox trading card set coin-

ciding with the crossover, and at your local comic shops.

Though it's still quite early, both Carlin and Gruenwald were willing to give their predictions for the fight.

"I actually predict that it's going to be a close fight." said Carlin. "DC has been there longer and has survived worse than this. We're gonna take it pretty fair and square, and we'll be a benevolent winner."

Gruenwald also said it would be close, but was quick to point out, "I really hope people don't vote because they want to do a disservice to one company or another, but [vote] by who they *truly* think will win. If they really think Batman will find a way to beat Captain America, vote that way." Of course Gruenwald quickly added, "Captain America cannot be beaten, so Captain America would win that one."

But beyond the bickering of just who would win in this colossal free-for-all, both sides were quick to agree that this crossover could be just what the comic industry needs right now.

"I really hope it sparks more interest and brings more human beings into comic stores" said Gruenwald. "And with any luck, retailers will know what to do with them once they're there and point them out to other things they may like."

"We just want to get some action going again," agreed Carlin, "and get some activity in comic shops. At the same time, it is a dream project." ■ *Andrew Kardon*

THE BIG ANNOUNCEMENT

THE SPANDEX SUITS HANG WITH THE CORPORATE SUITS

WHAT A BUNCH OF GOONS!

"HEY, WONDY, AFTER THIS CROSSOVER, WADDA YA SAY YOU AND I DO SOME WALL CRAWLIN'?"

MARVEL'S MARK GRUENWALD (LEFT) AND DC'S MIKE CARLIN FACE THE PUBLIC

SPAWN on 'A Current Affair': Fair Treatment?

Jim McHugh

Todd McFarlane, welcome to "A Current Affair." The creator of *Spawn* found himself on tabloid television recently thanks to Dr. Mary Williams Ahmed, a Grand Forks, N.D., parent determined to stop his comics.

Ahmed was upset after her seven-year-old son picked up a copy of *Spawn*. She pointed out examples of racism and lynchings in *Spawn* #30, an issue that involved the Ku Klux Klan.

"No person should have to be exposed to that type of trash, and this is a war that I'm going to join if I'm going to join any war in America," Ahmed told "A Current Affair." "And that is to protect the lives of innocent children."

McFarlane also appeared on the piece, but, after seeing it, said "A Current Affair" was selective in what it presented.

"I'm always amused when I see the playbacks on these sort of things I'm involved with, and going through it, you can say 'That's not true, that's not true, that's not true'," he said.

"It's the number-one-selling comic book, and somehow they missed the detail that the hero is a black man," said McFarlane, who added that the final point of the issue's story—a racist is turned black and then hanged by his colleagues—was lost.

Responding to Ahmed's charges, McFarlane told *Wizard*: "It's impossible to accommodate every single person's point of view. I have a certain line that I draw that I think is responsible. My line doesn't always match up with everyone else's." (For more on McFarlane's reaction to the tabloid TV report, see his EGO column on page 200.)

McFarlane noted that the piece on "A Current Affair" should have little effect on either *Spawn* or the comics industry. ■ *Rob Allstetter*

It's 'Go, Joe!' for Dark Horse in December

Continuing its reputation for high-quality comics licensed from major media properties, Dark Horse Comics will launch its *G.I. Joe* series this December.

Dark Horse and G.I. Joe owner Kenner Toys announced that Dark Horse had acquired the license for the long-standing action figure line earlier this year.

The new *G.I. Joe* will be written by Mike W. Barr (*Mantra*) and penciled by Tatsuya Ishida (*Godzilla*). Scott Reed (*Godzilla*, *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*) will ink the series.

Barr stressed that this series will have no connection to the continuity established in the popular Marvel Comics series of the 1980s. "We're starting over with a clean slate," he said, with all-new characters and settings adapted from the syndicated *G.I. Joe* animated series beginning this fall.

In the new series, *G.I. Joe* is a codename for a crack team of military specialists organized to strike back against the forces of S.K.A.R. (Soldiers of Kaos, Anarchy and Ruin) in the year 2010. ■ *Patrick Daniel O'Neill*

Star Wars and Kellogg's: Together, They're Grrreat!

Timed to coincide with the re-release of the *Star Wars* trilogy in a digitally re-mastered home video collection, Kellogg's cereals and Dark Horse Comics are offering an exclusive *Star Wars* comic book, featuring the characters from Dark Horse's *Star Wars: X-Wing Rogue Squadron* series.

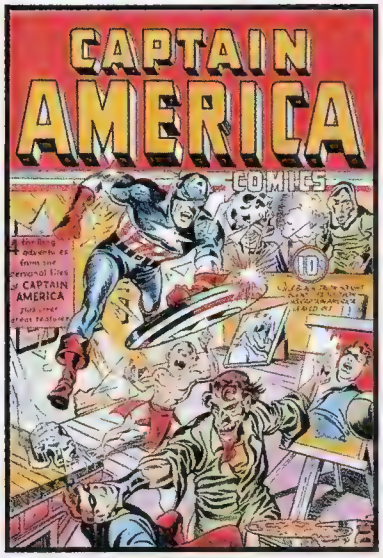
The 16-page story, written by Ryder Windham with art by the team of John Nadeau and Monty Sheldon, is only available by sending in a proof of purchase from specially marked packages of Kellogg's Apple Jacks cereal. "The only purchase they have to make is the cereal," said Dark Horse spokesman Mike Martin. "It's not a case of 'Now you have the privilege of buying this comic for a buck and a half.' Just send in the proof of purchase and you'll get the comic book in return."

In a move sure to make comics retailers happy, the cereal boxes and the comic itself include the advice that *Star Wars* fans should look for their local comics shop in the Yellow Pages to find further comic book adventures of the galaxy's bravest space-fairing heroes. "The note to look for your local comics shop was an important component of the promotion," Martin said.

The offer will be featured in television commercials for Apple Jacks and in Sunday newspaper coupon supplements, as well as in Dark Horse's regular *Star Wars* titles. Apple Jacks boxes with the offer will be on store shelves from September through December. ■ *Patrick Daniel O'Neill*

Big-Selling Team-Up: Marvel and Christie's

This November, Marvel will team up with a group you may never have heard of. The character line-up contains The Avengers, Captain America, Daredevil, The Fantastic Four and The X-Men. Artists contributing include Dick Ayers, John Buscema, Dave Cockrum, John



Romita Sr., John Severin, Joe Simon, Bill Sienkiewicz and Jack Kirby.

Marvel's partner is the world-famous Christie's auction house. The two will jointly host "Christie's Comic Extravaganza Weekend," a major auction of art and collectibles. Original comic book artwork, animation cels and a wide variety of paraphernalia will be available, as well as recreated classic artwork (new art based on an original by the same creative team) specifically created for and only available at this auction.

Auction highlights include:

• Ghost Rider motorcycle. A 1995 cycle painted and signed by Sienkiewicz; it has only two miles on it and its value is estimated at $30,000-$50,000.

• "X-Men," "Spider-Man," "Fantastic Four" and "Iron Man" cels, from the current animated series.

• Original art, cover recreation from *Captain America #7*, commissioned by Marvel for the Christie's auction. Created by Joe Simon, it is one of the seven *Captain America* covers which he painted. Ranging from $8,000-$10,000.

• Assorted Marvel collectibles from the 1960s, including trading cards and miniature comic books, Marvel Action Hour Flicker Rings, Spider-Man rings, T-shirts, Merry Marvel Marching Society items including Superheroes Club buttons, Marvel records, etc. Lots range from $100-$400. ■ *Ruth Morrison*

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FEEL! Diabolical Gastric Fear...!
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Moondog's Opens Boutiques in Music and Video Stores

What could be the beginning of a national chain of comic shops was kicked off in September, with the opening of a comics "boutique" in the new F.Y.E. (For Your Entertainment) music and video store in Trumbull, Conn.

The comics department in the store is a result of a strategic joint alliance between Classics International Entertainment, parent of the Moondog's chain of comics shops, and Trans World Entertainment, parent of the F.Y.E., Record Town, Tape World, Coconuts and Saturday Matinee chains.

Two more stores—in Albany and Rochester, N.Y.—are set to open before Christmas. The agreement could lead to 100 such departments in Trans World outlets by the end of 1996.

Classics president Gary Colabuono told *Wizard*, "This is the deal I always wanted to make." He said the locations of the comics departments will be based on the size of existing Trans World stores, and that the departments will be stocked and manned by Moondog's personnel.

According to Richard Berger, CEO of Classics, the alliance comes as the result of over nine months of discussions with Trans World. "We expect this strategic alliance to be the first in a series for us. We are currently involved in discussions with other major strategic partners," Berger stated.

Classic is also in negotiation with Sears for comics boutiques in selected Sears locations. ■ *Patrick Daniel O'Neill*

company updates

ACCLAIM COMICS

Coming from the Armada imprint in December is *Baywatch—The Magazine* #1, a 64-page issue featuring all the characters from the TV show. The comic uses photographic skills of actress Pamela Anderson and crew, utilizing state-of-the-art technology to create all-new stories.

ARCHIE COMICS

One of today's hottest TV shows is spoofed in December's *World of Archie* #18, in a story called "The X-Folders!" Watch Archie and Veronica take on U.F.O.'s in Riverdale! Later that month, Archie's *Superteens* #4 introduces the superheroine Miss Vanity to the world (Now, what Archie teenager could she *possibly* be?), as she battles the Rearranger!

BLACKOUT COMICS

December's variant month at Blackout with two limited-edition variant covers hitting the stands for both *Jugular* #0 and *Hot Kor Commemorative* #1. The latter will be a platinum-enhanced variant cover limited to 5,000 copies.

BONEYARD PRESS

Thanks to plenty o' popular demand, the *Babylon Crush* mini-series—starring Boneyard's baddest babe—will now be an ongoing series. Issue #4 is scheduled to ship in December with a cover price of $2.95.

BONGO COMICS

Homer Simpson in charge of a beer company?!? It unbelievably happens in *Simpsons Comics* #14, when he somehow snags the job of the Duff Beer empire's brewmiester! The $2.25 book ships in November.

CALIBER PRESS

November's a major month for Caliber! *Kabuki: Circle of Blood* #6 brings the series to an end and Kabuki closer to her final reincarnation! Prepare for an all-new color series very soon. *OZ* #3 launches a brand-new storyline, as the Freedom Fighters attempt to free Peter from the horrible Nome King. *Seeker* returns, starring a female criminologist inhabited by an Atlantean sorcerer in *Seeker* #1, a 48-page, for only $2.95. If you're thinking about getting into Caliber books—or are already a devout fan—the *Caliber Spotlight Autographed Edition* is perfect for you. It presents brand-new stories of *Kabuki*, *A.K.A. Goldfish*, *OZ*, *Raven Chronicles* and many other titles, plus several previews and interviews. All in an 80-page comic, autographed by at least two of the contributing creators, for only $2.95!

CHAOS! COMICS

Evil Ernie: Straight to Hell #4 is an important issue for Lady Death followers, as Ernie's wild quest for his main babe results in her returning to Earth. Since LD wasn't supposed to do that until all of the world's residents were dead, her arrival triggers major ramifications forever altering the Chaos! universe as we know it. This Earth-shaking, Steven Hughes-covered issue ships in January for $2.95.

COMICO/NORTHSTAR

The debut and origin of Lady Bathory—a gorgeous and deadly warrior who's much more than a Bad Girl—in *Primer* #1 shares November's spotlight with the multi-artist *Elementals Lingerie* #1. Both offer Chromium covers and artwork by Buzz, while Tony Akins (*Star Wars*) draws the month's third big book, the action-packed *Red Dragon* #2, featuring a vicious Red Dragon/Shoe Chun battle.

CRUSADE ENTERTAINMENT

Crusade introduces a brand-new title in January, when Shi's big sister Tomoe stars in a major three-issue series that answers many questions about her. In a Crusade first, creator Bill Tucci—who provides the series' covers—is handing the writing, penciling and inking over to other creators: Dan Mishkin, Amanda Conner (*Gargoyles*) and Jimmy Palmiotti (*Ash*), respectively. *Tomoe* #0—which is actually a prelude to *Shi* #6/*Tomoe* #1—will be followed by #2 and #3, with a big wrap-up in April's *Shi* #9.

DARK HORSE COMICS

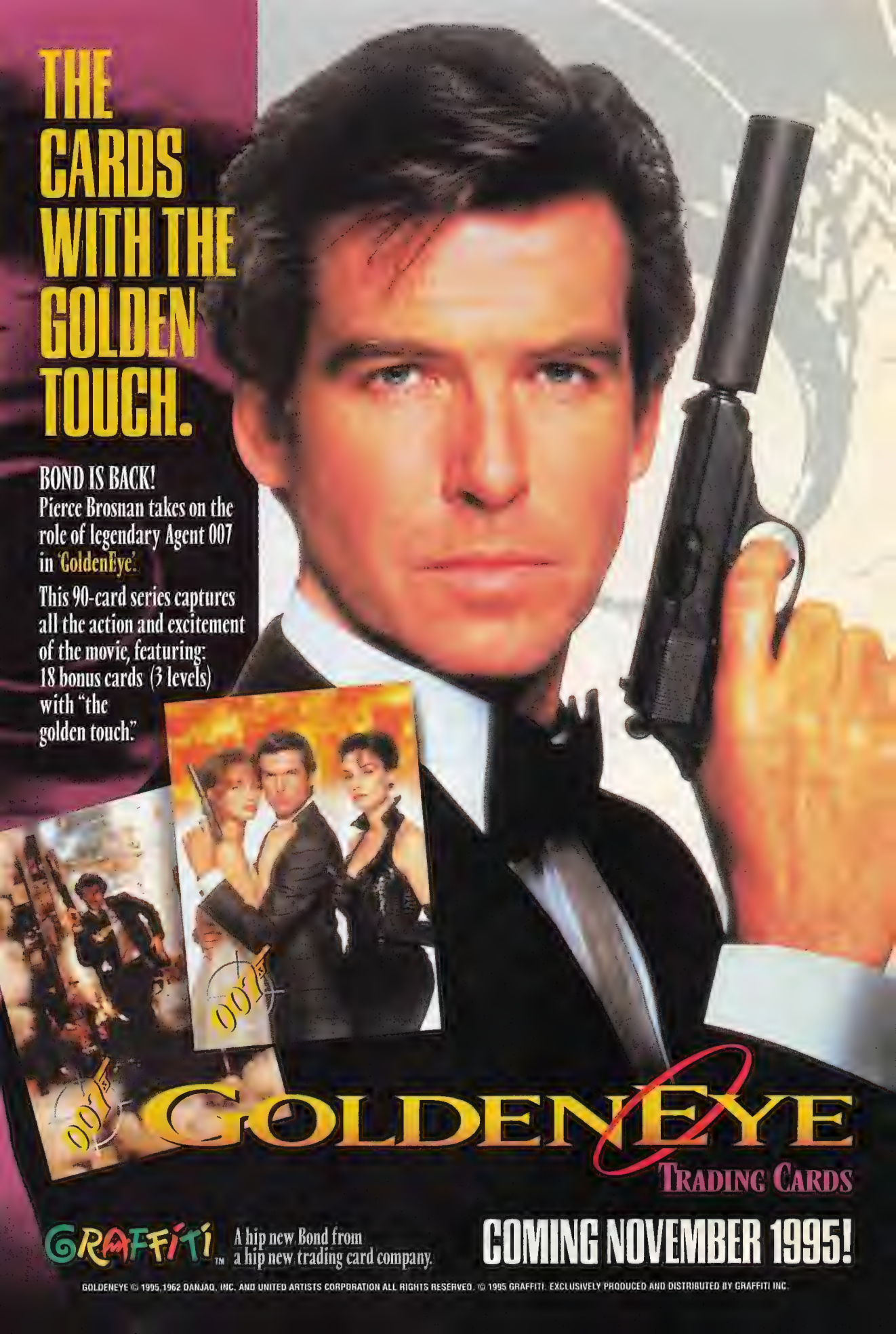
Starting in November, Terry LaBan's *Cud Comics* will appear monthly from Dark Horse. Also that month, LaBan's writing will be showcased in *Grendel Tales: The Devil May Care* with art by Peter Doherty.

ENTITY COMICS

Lookin' for some laughs? Check out *Apathy Kat* #1, shipping this November. Follow the adventures of Apathy Kat and Professor Straightface in the 51st hamlet of Arcadia. If you're a fan of *Strangelove*, check out November's *Hyper Bullies Christmas Special* #1 which features a bunch o' Christmas tales starring those wacky elves Maxim, Jez and Kibosh, as well as Hardick, Lowkey and Highwater. *Knight Hawke Investigations* #1 sees Angel Knight and Jonathan Hawke attempt to unlock the mystery of the disappearance of 250 sci-fi conventioneers. It ships in December. December also sees Nira X make a shocking revelation about the destruction of her timeline in *Nira X* #2 (3rd series).

FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS

Acme Novelty Library #6 continues the quarterly series as Jimmy Corrigan and his dad have dinner, Jimmy sleeps on the couch, his dad's car is stolen, and


THE CARDS WITH THE GOLDEN TOUCH.
BOND IS BACK!
Pierce Brosnan takes on the role of legendary Agent 007 in 'GoldenEye'.
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Massachusetts Comics Museum
Celebrates Third Anniversary

It was party time for members of the Words and Pictures Museum in Northampton, Mass. The museum celebrated its third anniversary August 26th with festivities at the facility and at a local night spot.

The day began with a signing at the museum with *Cerebus* creator Dave Sim and *Stray Toasters* creator Bill Sienkiewicz. Sienkiewicz's appearance coincides with the exhibit of his and Frank Miller's work on *Elektra: Assassin* for Marvel.

Later in the evening, folks gathered for the annual appreciation party, at which Words and Pictures passed out 21 awards to members. The majority of the awards (framed and signed pieces of original art) went to the lucky few who have been members in good standing since the museum opened in 1992.

There were two other "special" awards handed out. One to the museum gift shop's number one customer and one to the Ivey family of Michigan.

The Iveys were presented the "early bird" award for showing up one week early for the big bash, apparently because of a mix-up on the dates in the museum's newsletter. For their troubles, they were given a signed, painted page from an Archie Comics version of *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*. ■ *Doug Rossi*

THE BLUE ANGELS SOAR INTO FOUR COLOR

Flight fans should get a bang out of *The Blue Angels Comic Book*, a realistic tribute to America's premiere flight demonstration team. Published by Pepper Pike Graphics—the folks who brought you *Moon Shot: The Flight of the Apollo 12*—*The Blue Angels* is written by aerospace journalist D.C. Agle and drawn by Tony Hicks.

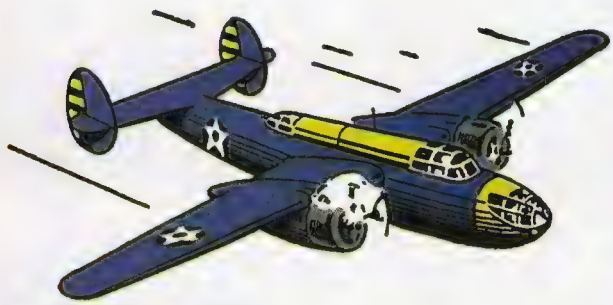
"*Blue Angels* is about real people," said Agle. "These guys are the oldest jet demo team and it was a pleasure and an education to work with them."

Agle's hands-on research included trips to Pensacola, Fla., and El Centro, Calif., to watch the team fly. There, he interviewed each of the pilots in their local habitats. "They're great guys," he said. "They love working with young people and relating their stories—and, of course, they're some of the best pilots in the world."

The comic covers the history of the Blue Angels and illustrates how jet engines work and how airplanes fly. It also includes graphics and statistics of every Blue Angels aircraft as well as an interview with "Boss," the team commander.

Everything in *The Blue Angels*—from story to art—was double-checked by the Blue Angels themselves. "We're the only comic in the world approved by the Pentagon," Agle boasted.

How did Agle happen to match up comics and pilots, or astronauts for that matter? "It's a natural," he said. "Comics and *real* heroes. It's a unique niche, and I'm excited to be part of it."



a whole bunch more. The issue, which ships in November, retails for $3.95.

HIGH IMPACT STUDIOS

The gloves (and more?) are off when Jazz and China go up against Blondish in *Double Impact #5*, shipping in November for $2.95.

IMAGE COMICS

• Cartoon Books

If you're looking for any back issues of *Bone* from Cartoon Books, you might be having some trouble. The company is no longer selling any— but have no fear! Beginning in November, Image Comics will be printing issues #1–#20 on a monthly basis with all-new covers. Cartoon Books will, however, still be offering the trade paperbacks and hardcovers.

• Motown Machineworks

Though originally announced as being published by Marvel, Motown is now at Image, with the company's first title starting in December. *The Crush*, a five-issue mini-series, is about a guy who's a psychiatrist by day and vigilante by night. It's written by Mike Baron with art by N. Steven Harris and Reggie Jones. Look for the Walter McDaniel cover... Also be on the lookout for *Casual Heroes* in January and *Man Against Time* in February.

• WildStorm Productions

WildStorm! #4 (of 4) features three inter-connected tales of the members of StormWatch as they give thanks for their very lives in this Thanksgiving-oriented issue. The final issue to this mini-series, which ships in November, ties in to *StormWatch #30* which sets things up for some major changes in the team.

KITCHEN SINK PRESS

There are a number of Crow mini-series planned for 1996, starting with the James O'Barr-plotted *The Crow: Dead Time* in January. Kitchen Sink ain't saying yet if Eric Draven appears in it... November sees the release of the second issue of Charles Burns' plague-infesting tale *Black Hole*. Issue #2 retails for $3.50 and is suggested for you mature reader types.

KNOWN ASSOCIATES PRESS

Shipping in November is *Known Associates Mysteries: The Green Skull*, the second issue of the quarterly series starring amateur sleuths Raymond Fish and Delphinia Morgan.

LIGHTNING COMICS

November's *Hellina: Wicked Ways #1* brings back the popular Lightning character Perg, as Hellina may return to her wicked ways. The $2.75 book has a full-color cover, black-and-white interiors and two variant editions... January sees Hellina teaming up with those babes from High Impact in *Hellina/Double Impact #1*.

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Phoney Bone Jazzes up CD Cover

Jeff Smith, creator of the award-winning comic book, *Bone*, was surprised to discover that the likeness of one of his characters, Phoney Bone, appeared without his permission on the cover and interior art of a British jazz band's CD.

"I was at a convention when this kid comes up to me and says, 'So how about the new Phoney Bone CD?'" said Smith. "I paid the kid $20 to go buy me a copy. Sure enough, there was Phoney Bone on the cover. I thought, 'This is going to be a problem.'"

The CD featured the jazzy hip-hop music of British band, 8UP. Soul Jazz, the London-based record company who produced the CD, had purchased the Phoney Bone art from a well known London graffiti artist. Little did the company know, the graffiti art was swiped from an issue of *Bone*.

After listening to the CD, Smith was suitably impressed with 8UP. "I was thinking, 'Man, I really like their music, but I'm gonna have to sue them,'" said Smith, laughing. Fortunately, Smith and Soul Jazz were able to settle without any major litigation.

Smith highly recommends the music of 8UP, which he describes as a combination of Miles Davis-style jazz and current hip hop. ■ *Christopher Griffen*

DC and MARVEL Go Cosmic

Before the big DC/Marvel crossover in December (see page 16), two of the more powerful denizens of the two companies' universe will meet in late November, courtesy of writer Ron Marz, in a Silver Surfer/Green Lantern 48-page one-shot published by DC.

Marz is uniquely suited to write this momentous meeting, seeing as how he is the current writer of *Green Lantern* and the former writer of *Silver Surfer*.

The inevitable first question has to be: "Which Green Lantern will be involved—Hal Jordan or Kyle Rayner?" The answer is "Both." Kyle Rayner will be the co-protagonist of the story, while Hal "Parallax" Jordan and Thanos will be the primary villains. The secondary villains are no slouches either: Terrax the Tamer and the Cyborg Superman.

According to Marz, Thanos and Parallax are up to their old tricks in pursuit of their own special goals. Thanos wants to end all creation as a gift for his beloved Death. Parallax, on the other hand, wants to recreate the universe according to his own design and avoid the destruction of Coast City. To these ends, when a dimensional rift opens in the former site of the planet Oa, each villain recruits a hero from the other universe. Hal Jordan finds a somewhat kindred spirit in the guilt-ridden Silver Surfer, while Thanos finds the neophyte Green Lantern easy to sway to his side.

"I start with the destruction of two universes and then work my way backwards," Marz reported with a chuckle. "This has been a lot of fun. The Kryptonians haven't been treated as separate entities in a crossover for many years. So one, it's been like going into a candy store and being told to pick out what you want."

Marz, with Peter David, will be co-writing the big four-issue DC/Marvel crossover. Even though there will be some foreshadowing in *Silver Surfer/Green Lantern*, the two series are meant to stand separately. This one-shot will be penciled by regular *Green Lantern* artist Darryl Banks and inked by Terry Austin. ■ *Paul L. Gunn*

company updates

LONDON NIGHT STUDIOS

Starting in December, the *Razor: Torture* mini-series brings London Night into a new era, as Razor (who was dead for a while) returns, and every London Night character guest-stars. Issue #0 features LNS' first wraparound chromium cover and is bagged with one of three chromium Razor cards.

MALIBU COMICS

December is "Phoenix Resurrection Month" as the Marvel/Malibu crossover story sees the return of Marvel's deadliest X-Men villainess. And it'll take the combined forces of the X-Men and the Ultraverse to bring her down. The story spans all of the Malibu titles and kicks off in *Phoenix Resurrection—Genesis* and ends with *Phoenix Resurrection—Revelations*. ... Coming your way in December is another Marvel/Malibu crossover: *Rune vs. Venom*, written by Chris Ulm with an artist to be determined. ... Lord Pumpkin rears his ugly fruit head in *The Night Man #3*.

MIDNIGHT PRESS

Alister the Slayer #3, which ships in December, features a cover by Joe Quesada and Jimmy Palmiotti. Starting in January, the book becomes a monthly title.

TOPPS COMICS

December's *X-Files Special Edition #2* collects *The X-Files #4-#6*. ... Coinciding with the release of the new James Bond flick *Goldeneye*, Topps is adapting the film into comic book form in a three-issue mini-series due in December. ... December's *Return to Jurassic Park #9* is a special "Jurassic Jam" issue. Plotted by Keith Giffen, the book will have art by the likes of Adam Hughes, George Perez, Paul Gulacy, Walter Simonson, John Bolton, Michael Golden and others.

TRU STUDIOS

Due in November is the first *Trollords Classics* trade paperback, reprinting *Trollords #1-#3*. The book also contains 30 pages of new story and art, and a special two-page reproduction of the "Faces of Death" jam art print which features interpretations of death by Alex Ross, Dan Jurgens, John Byrne, Dave Sim and others.

SMALL PRESS OUTTAKES

The cover to Radical Comics' *The Innocents #3* is by Liam Sharp (*Incredible Hulk*). ... Out in December from NGNG Studios is *Rana 7 #1*, the first of a two-issue mini-series which stars 100-million-year-old genetically engineered frogs who must settle a bitter rivalry which has escalated into murder. ... Film actress Brinke Stevens stars in her own three-issue mini-series titled *Brinke of Destruction* from Revenge Entertainment with covers by Boris Vallejo and Julie Bell. It ships in December.

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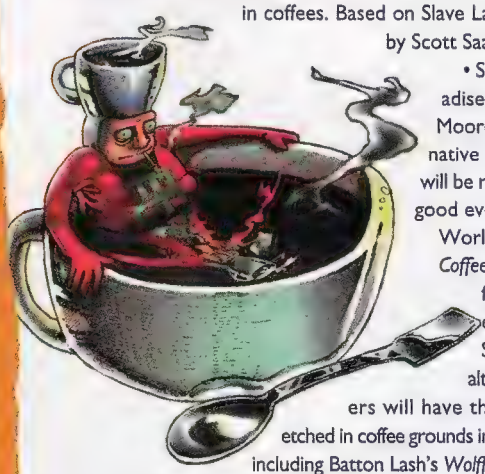
TOO MUCH COFFEE, MAN!

World Comics, publisher of *Coffee World* and *Toe Jam*, is producing a line of coffee blends based on several alternative publishers' comics. Among the blends are the following:

• Too Much Coffee Man blend—Needless to say, there's a strong dose of caffeine in this one. Night owls, take note. Based on the comic by Shannon Wheeler.

• Javatown—A good mix of blends to reflect the title's eclectic taste in coffees. Based on Slave Labor's *Javatown*, by Scott Saavedra.



• Strangers in Paradise—Terry Moore's unique alternative romance comic will be represented by a good everyday blend.

World Comics' own *Coffee World* will also feature a good everyday blend. Several other alternative publishers will have their namesakes etched in coffee grounds in the near future, including Batton Lash's *Wolff & Byrd*.

World Comics publisher Jamie Macsisak employs the blending mastery of Portland-based Bridgetown Coffee Roasters to produce the blends. "I let them know basically what I'm interested in and they give me samples," said Macsisak.

"From there I make the selection based on what the comic's creator wants to fit the theme of the comic."

World Comics' coffee blends are available in one-half and one-pound bags for $4.95 and $9.95, respectively. Each bag features a unique collectors' label printed with the logo of its alternative comic namesake. World Comics' coffee blends will be available in comic specialty stores and select coffee shops this December. ■ *Christopher Griffen*

Jim Lee Returns

After roughly a one-year sabbatical from comic books, *WildC.A.T.s* creator and WildStorm Productions founder Jim Lee is back. Lee will be spending much more time on creating and drawing new projects and less on the business end of WildStorm.

Helping with this transition is the announcement of WildStorm's new president, John Nee. The former Director of Business Affairs for WildStorm replaces Lee in that position; Lee will remain as WildStorm's CEO.

"John's been here for years, but not as president," said WildStorm Marketing Director Jeff Mariotte. "Jim is transferring more of the administrative stuff to John so that he can get back to drawing."

Upcoming work from Lee includes *Gen*[13] #6 and #7 due out in November and December, respectively, as well as drawing part of December's *Grifter/Shi* hardcover crossover with Bill Tucci and Travis Charest. Watch future issues of *Wizard* for more details. ■ *John B. Lacey*

Zot! Gets Collected

Since Scott McCloud's *Understanding Comics* has become a necessary reference guide for many comics fans, McCloud has received plenty of feedback for his earlier comic series *Zot!*. And now you can see what all the excitement's about yourself, as early 1996 sees Kitchen Sink Press reprinting *Zot!* in four volumes.

The collection will contain all 36 issues of the regular series, including 280 pages of full color art. They will not be mere reprints, however, of material already published. There will be new covers for each volume, as well as introductions from Kurt Busiek and Neil Gaiman.

McCloud is using sophisticated computer graphics software for the new covers as well. He promises that some of the artwork is being retouched, and the mistakes made during the rush of the regular comics' production have been fixed. ■ *Henry Colonna*

Valentino joins Extreme Studios

Jim Valentino—creator of ShadowHawk and founder of Image Comics' Shadowline Studios—has been named Executive Creator Director for Rob Liefeld's Extreme Studios, reuniting a pair of creators whose careers together date back to the *New Mutants*, *Guardians of the Galaxy* and *X-Force* at Marvel.

Valentino's current line of titles will be distributed under the umbrella of Extreme Studios, with Valentino retaining creative control and the universes of the two lines eventually merging.

"This is a chance to do something different," said Valentino. "After x number of years, you get into a creative rut. I want to stretch out. Now I have the ability to interact with people half my age. That's good. It's good for an older creator to work with younger people. Hopefully I'll be rejuvenated by this."

According to Liefeld, Valentino will be responsible for a variety of duties—including writing, editing, layout and administering certain Extreme titles.

"Rob was looking for someone who would be a combination editor-in-chief, executive art director and an administrator," said Valentino. "In conversations with [Image's executive director] Larry Marder, my name came up as someone that can do all three."

A crossover is planned for February/March between issues #6-#7 of *ShadowHawk* that will deal with ShadowHawk's emergence into the Extreme titles, tentatively titled *Night of the ShadowHawk*.

A *ShadowHawk/Supreme* special by Keith Giffen and friends was already in the works prior to the deal and is still in the planning stages, with no release date yet available. ■ *Joe Yanarella*

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Halloween Knight

By Marc Shapiro

Jeph Loeb and Tim Sale take a third go around at the Legends of the Dark Knight Halloween Special

Batman eats some bad shrimp and has some pretty bad dreams in the third annual *Legends of the Dark Knight Halloween Special* featuring those nasty villains The Penguin, Joker, Poison Ivy and, according to writer Jeph Loeb, a mystery villain to be named later.

"People have been asking us who is in this issue," says Loeb who, with partner-in-Halloween-crime Tim Sale, have gotten this holiday perennial out since 1993. "The Penguin sort of sets up the story but that's not what *this* story is about. Poison Ivy and The Joker are the two major villains, and then there's this surprise."

"No, I won't spill the beans on the mystery villain," chuckles Sale. "If Jeph called him that, then I think that's the way we should leave him."

This latest Halloween haunt, entitled *Batman: Ghosts—A Legends of the Dark Knight Halloween Special*, tells the tale of the night before Halloween when Bruce Wayne, after a knockdown, drag-out fight with The Penguin and a meal containing some bad shrimp, is visited by the ghost of his father. His "father" tells him he will be visited by three spirits coming to warn him that his obsession with Batman will ultimately destroy him. The issue, which also features the contributions of colorist Greg Wright and letterer Todd Klein, is a "Year One" era exercise which, according to Sale, borrows liberally from a time-honored holiday classic.

"Jeph had the idea that he wanted to do a version of *A Christmas Carol*. My first reaction was that everybody and his mother has done it. But the more we talked about it, the more the idea really seemed to fit Batman. The story lent itself to the kind of tortured, personal stuff that we really like to do with Batman."

According to Sale—who offers that the book qualifies as a Year One tale because of an absence of Robin, a different costume and a "still learning how to do things" attitude of Batman—*Ghosts* focuses, in a rather non-specific manner, "on a young Bruce who is self-absorbed in being Batman to the point of self-destruction."

"Bruce has no life outside of being Batman," continues Sale. "The ghost of his father shows up and kind of draws a parallel between Bruce's life and his as a doctor. His father devoted his time to his career and neglected his family and he's trying to prevent Bruce from going down the same path."

Amazingly cool is the working relationship that has formed between the two 30-something creators on these Halloween books and, in particular, this current Halloween happening. "Jeph came up with the idea and broke the story down," relates Sale. "Then we talked about how each page should be. We knew we needed some fighting and not just a story about Batman hallucinating in his bed, which is how The Penguin became part of it."

Loeb, for his part, says, "Working with Tim is like working with the best partner that anybody could have. How it ultimately works out between us is luck and the fact that he's far more talented then I am."

Loeb indicates that at least two more Batman Halloween Specials are in the works although no particulars are ready for print. "We've discussed doing something much larger in scope next year. I can't say anything about it at this point but, if it happens, it will be really big."

Loeb concludes that putting Batman in a Halloween setting has been a good creative move. "It just seems like Batman, Gotham City and Halloween naturally go together."

Marc Shapiro, who wrote the text to the Avengelyne photo shoot article last month (yes, there was text!), can relate to Charlie Brown. He gets rocks for Halloween too.

FIRST LOOK

KINGDOM COME

DC's upcoming Elseworlds series has Alex Ross and Mark Waid portraying legends in a new time: the future

"LOOK, UP IN THE SKY!" Though familiar to DC Comics fans, it's a phrase that's about to become redefined, as *Marvels* artist Alex Ross brings his unique perspective to DC early next year for the four-issue Elseworlds saga *Kingdom Come*.

Set some 20 years in the future, *Kingdom Come* chronicles an age when DC's "old" guard—including current heroes like Superman, Batman and Wonder Woman—has been driven into disheartened retirement by a new generation of supervigilantes. Disheartened, though, doesn't mean dead, and when the new breed pushes things too far, those old familiar capes, cowls and spandex come out of the mothballs for one last titanic conflict. "Essentially, it's the Image Comics Universe taking over the DC Universe," says writer Mark Waid (*X-Men*, *Flash*, *Underworld Unleashed*), who teamed with Ross shortly after the artist approached DC with the project well over a year and a half ago.

Although the story has a civilian vantage point—that of a minister whom the Spectre leads on what Ross describes as "a 'Christmas Carol'-type tour" of the approaching cataclysm—don't expect this to mirror the celebratory feel of *Marvels*. Instead, *Kingdom Come* laments the demise of the heroic ideal that superheroes embody.

"The only thing this story has in common with *Marvels* is that Alex is painting it," Waid says, guardedly likening the book more to such seminal icon-toppling efforts as *Watchmen* and *The Dark Knight Returns*. As a means to this lofty end, Ross adds, he has strived to create a sense that the legends are very time-worn. "I like the idea of representing these guys much more as the true age of their legends," he says. "I mean, Batman really looks like hell when you see him in this."

Bruce Wayne had better hope he feels better than he looks, because he's in for a workout. "The new heroes have a tendency to throw buses at each other and not give a living crap who's in the middle," Waid notes. "You can tell the heroes and the damage and human life are so far down on their list of priorities that they're bringing the world to a pretty quick ruin."

And, Ross adds, society's noticing. "You read an average comic and there's thousands of dollars worth of property damage, but there's not much focus on the impact on human society, mostly because it's considered boring. And my reaction to that is, 'After 60 or 70 years of coexistence between human and superhuman, how well do you think the relationship is going to hold up?'"

Tom Russo, a regular "Trailer Park" writer for Wizard, *keeps old Bit-O-Honey wrappers and a half-nude photo of Estelle Getty under his cape.*

BY TOM RUSSO

VITAL STATS

WHO:
Superman, Batman, Wonder Woman, The Spectre and loads of other current DC heroes, along with several new ones.

WHAT:
Kingdom Come, a four-issue Prestige Format mini-series set for early next year, co-produced by artist Alex Ross (*Marvels*) and writer Mark Waid (*Flash*).

WHAT'S THE DEAL?
This Elseworlds series will reveal what happens to many of DC's legendary heroes in a possible future, when they're replaced by conscienceless, violence-loving supervigilantes who are destroying the world through their careless deeds. This will be all be shown through a minister's perspective, as today's heroes are forced to take on tomorrow's.

YOU SHOULD KNOW:
It has taken Alex Ross a staggering four-and-a-half months to paint each issue of *Kingdom Come*.

The future Wonder Woman stays youthful-looking, thanks to her immortality.

Wizard casts the spooky DC/Vertigo movie!

Casting Call 10

All right, what kind of Halloween would it be without some sort of ultrascary horror flick? A pretty damn boring one! That's why we're takin' some of those freaky Vertigo characters (except for the Sandman & Co., because we already cast them back in issue #47) and a few wacky DC regulars as well, and tossing them up on the Big Screen. We've got some pretty big stars (no, we don't mean Dom Deluise) and some real eerie-looking characters in this flick, so it's a guaranteed blockbuster. So just sit back, relax, put yer feet up and dig in...

THE SPECTRE

Don't piss this guy off! DC's very own Spirit of Vengeance would be perfectly (and spookily) handled by Ian McDiarmid, who you'll probably remember as that evil Emperor from *Return of the Jedi*

By a bunch of *Wizard* staffers

All photos Everett Collection, unless otherwise noted

JOHN CONSTANTINE

Seeing as how the facial appearance of Swamp Thing's most-annoying "friend," and star of his own comic *Hellblazer*, was actually based on pop singer Sting, we figure he's pretty much got a lock on the part. And the fact that he's acted (well, OK, "appeared") in *Dune* and *The Bride* certainly helps.

DEADMAN

Hmm…dead *and* bald? After some heavy thinking, we figured William Sadler (*Die Hard 2*, *Bill and Ted's Bogus Journey*) would be absolutely perfect! Just don't try givin' him a Melvin!

TIM HUNTER

Small. Meek. Plenty of magic potential. We immediately thought of Josh Saviano, best known as Kevin Arnold's friend Paul Pfeiffer from "The Wonder Years."

THE DEMON

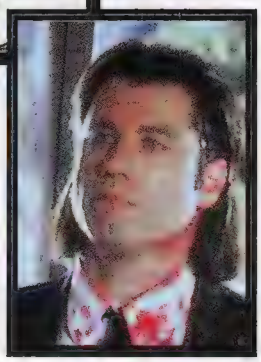
"Gone, gone o' form of man, give me the lead or this film's in the can!" Our rhyming spawn of hell is a perfect role for Louis Gossett Jr. (*An Officer and a Gentleman*, *Iron Eagle*), who already played a scaly-faced bastard in *Enemy Mine*.

KATANNA

This magical maiden would be brought to life by the hot hot hot hot (Did we mention she's kinda hot?) Jennifer Connelly from *The Rocketeer* and *Career Opportunities*. She just better be wearin' them fishnet stockings!

WESLEY DODDS (THE GOLDEN AGE SANDMAN)

Albert Brooks (*Defending Your Life*, *Broadcast News*, *The Scout*) has that down-to-earth look needed to play the Golden Age Sandman and bring you some pleasant dreams.

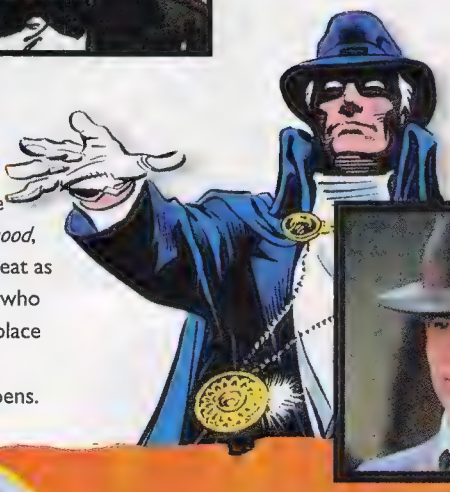


PREACHER

Since he's currently having such a major comeback, "Welcome Back, Kotter" and *Pulp Fiction*'s John Travolta would scare the beejeezus out of you as the preacher with the honest-to-God commanding voice.

PHANTOM STRANGER

Comic extraordinaire Steve Martin (*Parenthood*, *The Jerk*) would be great as the mysterious freak who pops up all over the place whenever something really, really bad happens.



VAMPS

What's that you say? Sounds cool, but needs more babes? Well, we've got five (count 'em, *five*) more for ya right here! We're throwing in the whole damn shebang o' vampire biker babes.

[illegible]

Bad Girl Traci Lords (*Cry-Baby*, "Melrose Place") would beautifully make your neck bleed as this feisty li'l vixen.

[illegible]

This fun-lovin' babe would be played by Tawny Kitaen, who you've seen as a spectacular actress on the TV shows "Hercules: The Legendary Journeys" and "The New WKRP in Cincinnati" (not to mention those spicy Whitesnake videos and the film *Bachelor Party*).

[illegible]

Seein' as how she's probably looking for any part nowadays, this one's got Shannen Doherty's ("Beverly Hills 90210," *Heathers*) name written all over it.

[illegible]

We're sure Kristy Swanson (*The Chase*, *Higher Learning*) would love to sink her teeth into this part. But isn't it pretty ironic that the star of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* is now playin' a vamp herself?

[illegible]

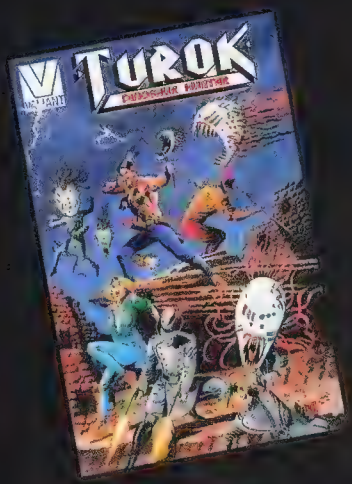
Elizabeth Berkley (*Showgirls*, "Saved by the Bell") would be pretty darn seductive as the Skeetster.

there you have it. We've got spooks, magicians and plenty o' babes. Even if the critics panned this puppy (they just hate horror flicks, ya know), it'd still be like 18 gazillion times better than *Friday the 13th Part 8*. God, that just sucked.

The Wizard *staff enjoys beating up little kids and stealing all their Halloween candy. (Hey, why waste time in a costume begging for candy door-to-door?)*

HUNT OR BE HUNTED.

TUROK. IN NOVEMBER.



40: SHOWDOWN IN THE LOST LAND. TUROK VS. LONGHUNTER.
THE ADVENTURES OF AN APACHE DINOSAUR HUNTER ON AN ALIEN WORLD.
BY TIMOTHY TRUMAN AND PAUL GULACY.

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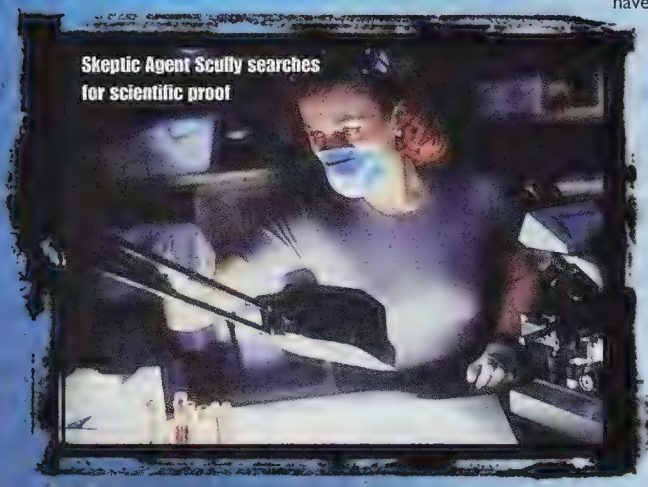
OPENING UP THE

How the 'X-Files' makes the unbelievable believable through the world of 'extreme possibility'

"X-FILES" creator/producer Chris Carter is big on phrases like "extreme possibility" and "the dark woods." They pop up frequently when he talks about his prime-time television sensation; a world where aliens, shape shifters, government creeps, genetic geeks and liver eaters are the blue plate special on this paranormal menu. How he stumbled into the "dark woods" of "The X-Files," he explains, was quite simple.

"I was a big fan of 'Kolchak: The Night Stalker,'" relates Carter. "That show scared the hell out of me as a kid. I loved it and had it in my head that I wanted to create something that would have similar appeal."

"Kolchak: The Night Stalker," a '70s monster mash about a reporter who had a knack for stumbling onto real horrors, lasted one memorable but under appreciated season. "The X-Files," on the other hand, is well into its third season and creating the kind of worldwide uproar that rivals the early days of "Star Trek" mania. The show has also given rise to a fanatic group of Internet types—known as X-Philes—who regularly computer surf in search of "X-Files" trivia and conversation. People have been slow to discover it but those close to "The X-Files" are convinced that the show's cult status days are numbered.



Skeptic Agent Scully searches for scientific proof

PHOTO: FOX

"This show has been like a secret vice for a whole lot of people out there," explains Carter. "And there's nothing like the disappointed feeling you get when your secret vice has been discovered."

For actor David Duchovny, who portrays agent Fox Mulder, the notion of cult is simply excess baggage. "Calling us a cult show is just a way of saying that we have a small audience. But our audience really isn't that small anymore, is it?"

"The X-Files" premise, with its tag lines "The Truth Is Out There" and "Trust No One," pairs true believer FBI agent Fox Mulder (Duchovny) and total skeptic scientist Dana Scully (Gillian Anderson) as the team assigned to unexplained cases or X-Files. Unexplained can be anything from UFOs to fluke monsters to possessions to serial killers and all points in between. Adding fuel to the formula is an intriguing backstory involving Mulder's sister being abducted by aliens, a whole slew of shadowy government types with names like Deep Throat, Mr. X and Cancer Man (formerly known as Cigarette Smoking Man) and a murky, moody, smoky, paranoid aura that makes the more extreme moments of "Twin Peaks" seem normal by comparison. "X-Files" episodes are always open-ended, don't always end successfully and, as one of the most intelligently written shows on the air, regularly suck viewers into the fact that all this could possibly be real. So real, in fact, that when Anderson announced that she was pregnant near the end of the first season, the writers created a believable storyline that would allow the actress to leave the show and come back without missing a beat.

By Marc Shapiro

'FILES'

Agent Mulder has a "close encounter"

PHOTO: KEN STANIFORTH/FOX

"Our attitude going into this show was that we could make aliens and liver-eaters work if we kept things in the realm of extreme possibility," says Carter of the show's popularity and growing fanatic following. "I think the key to our popularity is that we've shown that we can do good creepy mysteries without having to slap the cuffs on the villain at the end of each show."

Anderson, who insists "the show's success hasn't really hit me yet," is diplomatic in spreading around the reasons for the show's popularity.

"Personally I think all the elements of the show work towards making it what it is," Anderson says. "The production aspects of the show are slick and cool and smooth and moody and I think people really like that. They also enjoy the mystery they are taken on each week and like to follow the relationship between Scully and Mulder."

Duchovny, during the audition process for "The X-Files," expressed some concern that the UFO alien abduction premise would get real old, real fast. Carter, however, explains that UFOs and aliens were just the set-up to a much deeper storyline.

"It was always the show's intent to explore all facets of the paranormal and the unexplained," says Carter. "But I thought the UFO storyline was a good avenue into this world. It was always my intention to have stories about liver-eaters and shape-shifters but that the UFO story would always be lurking in the shadows even if it were not the main story."

The Muller/Scully relationship, typical of the sly subversive nature of the show, runs contrary to the expected nature of television. From the beginning, Mulder and Scully have been totally professional while remaining at arm's length romantically. James Wong, former writer/producer on "X-Files," laughingly recalls, "One of the first questions I wanted to know was when Mulder and Scully were going to go to bed." Adds producer/writer Howard Gordon: "These two people care about each other and they respect each other. I think they know that as soon as they share a bed that it will be all over for them and the show."

Carter chimes in with a laugh, "David keeps asking me, 'When am I going to get a babe who's not a vampire?'" Carter also insists he will resist to the death "the domesticating of the show."

"As soon as the characters' lives become more important or primary in the storytelling, I think that then we're not doing a good job of telling good 'X-Files' stories," Carter says. "If it works into another story, then that's probably how we will see these stories evolve. But otherwise, this is a story about the investigation of the paranormal. And that's what it will always be."

Duchovny and Anderson second the lack of touchie feelie on the show.

"Everybody is in agreement that it wouldn't benefit the show to have them get together," Anderson says. "I think Mulder and Scully should have their passion for their work and not each other. At least not in that way. If it ever happens, that would be the last show."

"I would hope the relationship would remain where it is," Duchovny has been quoted as saying. "Having a friendship and a professional working relationship with a woman is much more interesting and I'm sure Gillian would tell you the same thing. It's very easy to just jump into bed. That doesn't take much imagination."

And imagination is definitely the watchword. Mixing fact and fiction in the episode entitled "The Host," in which a Chernobyl-spawned mutant turns up in the New Jersey sewers, was a second-season highlight. And you'll never look at the opposite sex the same way again after casting your peepers at the first season ditty called "Gender Bender" in which sex quite literally kills. Even when "The X-Files" hasn't quite hit the mark, such as the barely believable episode called "Space" about an alien force sabotaging our space program, the show has been far and away the hardest working, most imaginative thing on the tube.

COMIC X-PLOSION

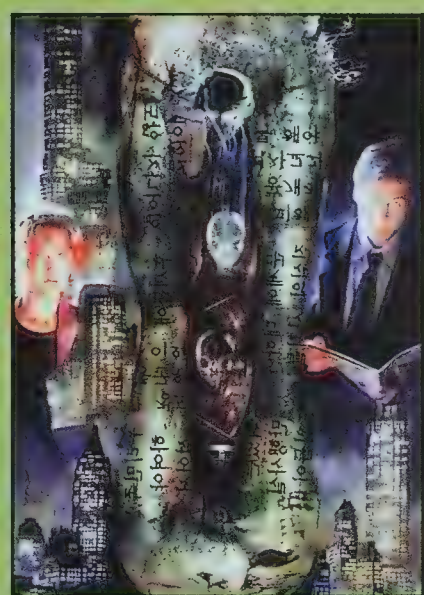
Topps editor Dwight Zimmerman is a pretty confident cat. But he admits to being on the high side of cautious when *X-Files #1* was about to hit the shops last January. "Anyone who told me last January that *X-Files* was going to be a blowaway hit, I would have said, 'What mental institution did you come from?'"

Zimmerman is happily doubting his own sanity these days as his X charge—eight issues and an annual into '95—has quite literally caught the industry by surprise. "We felt it would be successful, but did we anticipate it being a runaway success? Absolutely not!"

PHOTO JOHN T. BARR

So accordingly, the *X-Files* comic book universe is busting out all over. Besides the monthly adventures of Mulder and Scully, Topps recently released a successful *X-Files Annual* and, by year's end, will have unleashed the first of a projected series of quarterly *X-Files Digest* books. All courtesy of that hard-driving creative trio of writer Stefan Petrucha, artist Charles Adlard and cover artist Miran Kim.

"Initially, we wanted to go with a core group of three people because we didn't know how the series would go," declares Zimmerman, "and we wanted to develop a solid relationship between our creative team and the 'X-Files' television people. 'X-Files' is a very demanding show. There's a specific mood and atmosphere, and the show is not simply about anything. So we felt it was important to get a solid team on the book that was in tune with the show."



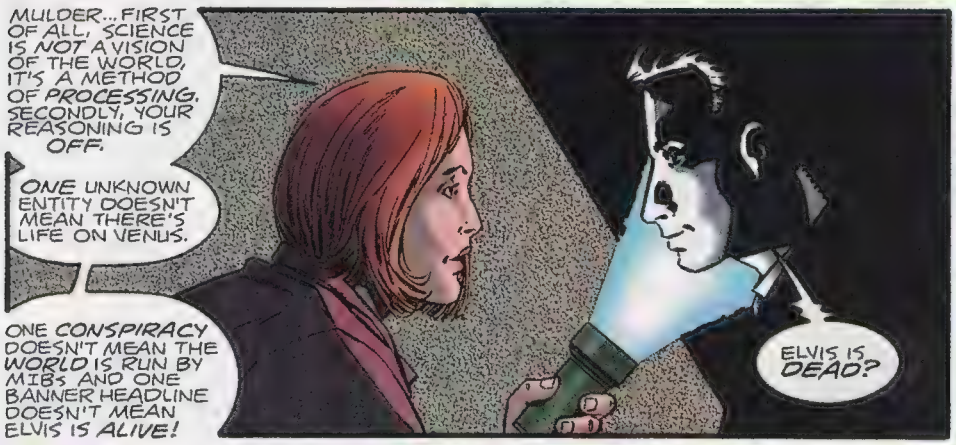
Zimmerman, who insists that the comics "are not an alternative universe but simply other stories from the 'X-Files,'" says the working relationship between the comics creative team and the "X-Files" television people has been real good. "We work very closely with Chris Carter [the producer/creator] and his people. They approve all the stories and the artwork and they are quick to alert us to changes coming up in the show so that we can avoid continuity problems. They are very conscientious about what they set up with the show and the books."

The editor also claims that future *X-Files* books will be very much in tune with the tone set with the TV series and the first comic books. "We'll be keeping true to the story and taking the lead from the development of the TV show. There will be mysterious criminal stories, odd stories that will take us into the world of virtual reality, ancient civilizations, possible alien encounters and just some very surprising things. Stefan has set up some neat twist material. You'll be thinking one thing as you're reading the story, but the result will actually be something quite different."

Charlie Novinskie, Topps sales and promotion manager, offers that there's more *X-Files* on the horizon. Specifically, an *X-Files #1/2* offer in *Wizard #53* and an *X-Files* quarterly magazine, scheduled for a November launch, that will cover all aspects of the "X-Files" phenomena. Zimmerman teasingly offers that there "are other exciting possibilities for *X-Files* on the horizon.

"But there's nothing I can talk about right now." ■

Marc Shapiro



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"I THINK THE KEY TO OUR POPULARITY IS THAT WE'VE SHOWN THAT WE CAN DO GOOD CREEPY MYSTERIES WITHOUT HAVING TO SLAP THE CUFFS ON THE VILLAIN AT THE END OF EACH SHOW."

—"X-FILES" CREATOR CHRIS CARTER

PHOTO: CHRIS H. B./FOX

Carter, who offers that he really "gets off on giving people more than they are expecting," recalls that the biggest surprise to date came in the cliffhanging episode of the first season, "The Erlenmeyer Flask," in which the shadowy figure of Deep Throat is suddenly and unexpectedly killed.

"I didn't know going in that we would kill Deep Throat. But I wanted to give the audience an example of how anything could happen with this show and that they should not sit back and expect Deep Throat to show up every week and give Mulder the answer he needs. I felt that killing Deep Throat would catapult the series forward, but it was probably the hardest thing I had to do."

Into season three, Carter sees no immediate end to the pushing of the creative envelope. "I'm very proud of season one and two. Season two for me was actually a much better season in terms of quality. I think with season two we really found what made 'X-Files' tick and I think with season three we'll truly hit our stride. We were winging it for very much of the first season and part of the second. But I believe season three will be the best of the lot.

"But it's hard to say how long the show will go. I hope it goes on for a good long time but I think, if we get to season five or season six, stories will be a little harder to come by. By then, we will have probably touched on so many of the obvious areas of the paranormal."

But Duchovny and Anderson are confident that there's enough creative gas in "The X-Files" engine to keep them dancing to this different drum for quite a long time to come. "We've only begun to scratch the surface of story ideas," Anderson says. "There's so much source material and so many ideas. We could go on forever."

Duchovny is a bit more cautious. "I really don't know where another season will go. I'm not sure anybody knows at this point. The possibilities for this show are limitless; as limitless as the writer's imaginations. I guess we'll just have to see how limitless that ultimately is."

Carter jokingly says that while they've occasionally run afoul of network censors (the word necrophiliac had to be replaced by death fetishist in one episode), the approach to creating "The X-Files" fantastic world of "extreme possibility" has been one of fearlessness.

"Nothing freaks us out," he laughs. "Nothing is too extreme. But if we really cut loose on this show, we could get so far out that nobody would ever buy the concept. But, as long as we can keep the stories within the concept of extreme possibility, we can basically do anything.

"And we will."

Marc Shapiro claims that his freelance writing assignments all come from a mysterious cigarette-smoking informant.

PHOTO: MICHAEL GRECCO/FOX

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THE WRITE YOUR OWN INVITE CONTEST

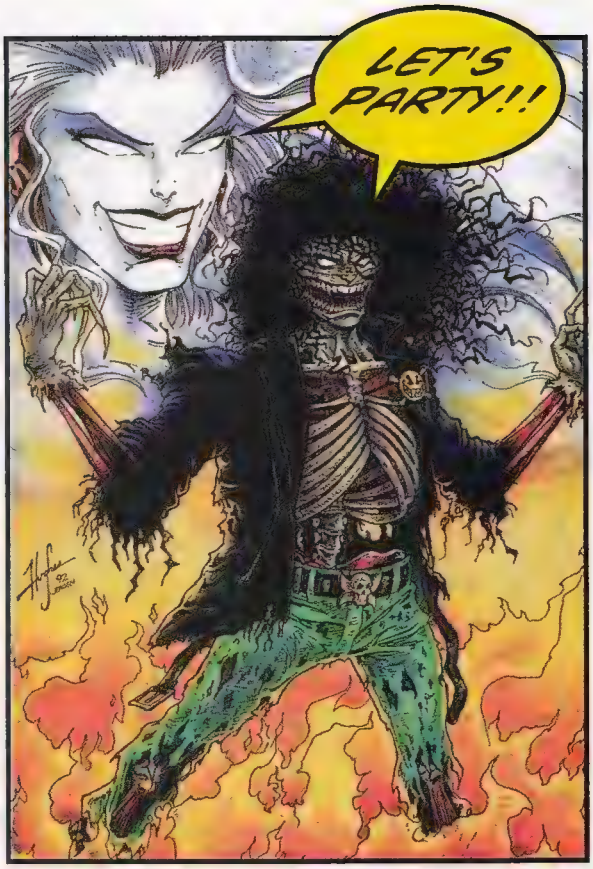
Aside from being famous for publishing nefariously thrilling comics like *Evil Ernie* and *Lady Death*, Chaos! Comics is also pretty darned famous for party-ability. Nobody throws a Halloween bash like the Chaos! folks. So it's no surprise that the Chaos! Halloween party is the comic book social event of the season, and invites are scarce. Only the creme de la creme get to come. Wanna wrangle an invite to this bash? Well, maybe you can—by writing your own!

Your wild and Chaotic host, Brian Pulido!
(NOTE: Mr. Pulido's right hand not shown actual size)

Photo by Jon Gipe

HOW TO PLAY

We want you to show off your artistic, writing and drafting skills by creating an invitation for a Chaos! Comics Halloween party. And remember—this is Chaos!, where darkness dwells. So fluffy bunnies and chirping bluebirds probably won't get you too far. We'll rifle through all the entries we get and narrow 'em down to the best 11 (looking for quality *and* originality, of course). Then we'll ship those off to our buddies at Chaos! and they'll pick the big winner. It is their invite, after all. Yes, that's right—*their* invite! Look below…



THE HEAVENLY PRIZES!

Grand Prize (1):

Grand Prize (1): One lucky party animal will actually get their design used as the official Chaos! Comics Halloween Party invitation for 1996! Oh, yeah—they'll also get an all-expenses-paid trip to the '96 Halloween bash, to be held at a double-secret location! Ooooh! Spooky!

Runners-Up (10):

Ten talented Runners-Up will receive a complimentary one-year membership in the Chaos! Comics Evil Ernie/Lady Death Fiend Club, along with all rights and responsibilities thereof. Learn the secret handshake!

Tasty Legal Dip

No purchase necessary. Contest is open to anyone except employees of Wizard Press, Chaos! Comics, their immediate families and Purgatori. That nasty-ass vampire broad just can't be trusted at a party. Print your name, date of birth, address, city, state, zip and telephone number with area code on the official entry form or a 3-by-5-inch index card and attach your entry to the form or card. Enter as many times as you like. Mail each entry separately to: Chaos! Invite Contest, c/o Wizard Press, P.O. Box 118, Congers, NY 10920-0118. No mechanical reproductions of completed forms are accepted, but you can photocopy the entry form before filling it out if you don't want to mess up your magazine. All entries become property of Wizard Press and none will be returned. All taxes (federal, state and local, if any) will be the responsibility of the prize winners. No cash equivalent or substitute prizes will be offered. Prizes are awarded in the names of the contest winners and are not transferable. Offer void where prohibited, regulated or restricted by law in a manner inconsistent with the purposes and rules hereof. Then again, we understand Purgatori can sure mix up a mean Bloody Mary. (And no killer robo-rabbits, either, people!) **All entries must be received at contest headquarters by December 31, 1995.** Wizard Press is not responsible for lost, late, misdirected or mutilated entries. Odds of winning will be determined by the number of valid entries received prior to the closing date of the contest. Prize winners will be selected based on quality, originality and creativity among all properly completed entries by Wizard Press and Chaos! Comics. Final judging will take place on January 15, 1996.

For a list of winners, available after January 15, 1996, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: Chaos! Invite Contest Winners, c/o Wizard Press, P.O. Box 118, Congers, NY 10920-0118.

Fill this out, attach it to your entry, toss it all in an envelope and send it to:

Chaos! Invite Contest
c/o Wizard Press, P.O. Box 118,
Congers, NY 10920-0118.

This contest is sponsored by Chaos! Comics, some people who we know throw one heckuva Halloween bash.

Evil Entry Form

DEADLINE IS DECEMBER 31, 1995!

Name _____ Age _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone Number (with area code) _____

Don't forget to enclose your invite!

Greg Capullo's

KRASH COURSE

DRAWING OUT THE MONSTER WITHIN

Happy Halloween, kiddies! It's trick-or-treat time once again. This lesson's treat will be learning the trick to creating your very own ghastly images that this time of year seems to inspire. Together we will embrace our fears, delight in our revulsion, and revel in the utter stench of our own putrid demons come to life within us! We will draw the things that make us sick (or at least *look* cool)!!! This won't be as much a drawing lesson as it will be a guideline to aid you in creating.

First off, let's think of some things that make our skin crawl. Things that we fear. These are the things we shall gather into our cauldron and stir together to form our monsters. Every classic monster you care to name was created this way. Dracula, Frankenstein, The Mummy, The Fly and The Wolfman. You will find that man's fears and aversions were called together to form each of them.

BOO! GUESS WHO?

1. yuck

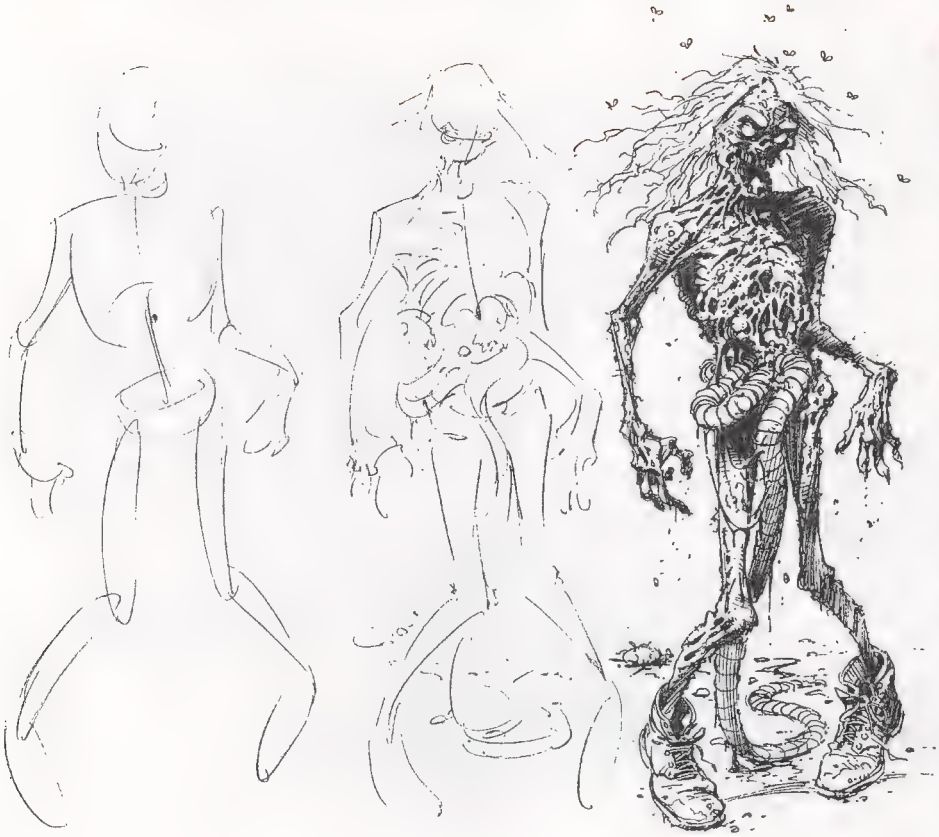
In my first little creature, I combined insect-like appendages with a form that's almost human and some other icky elements ladled in for effect. Sharp spiny things that could pierce your flesh protrude from the monster along with course hair just like those found on a fly or spider's body. Rows of shark-like teeth adorn the saliva-filled jaws ready to chomp off a limb. Large claws with multiple hooks and spikes present the danger of ripping and tearing away at your flesh. Hinged animal-like legs were given to provide the creature with speed in which to capture you for the kill. And warts were thrown in to provide grotesque texture to the beast's skin. Perhaps being filled with thick, sticky puss (the tasty kind).

Try drawing the following examples if you like. I've shown the basic construction used for each. However, draw many of your own. That's where the real fun is.

KRASH COURSE and all related text, artwork and characters ™ & © Greg Capullo.

2. eew

In my next creation, I combined a symbol of adorable innocence (a little girl) and corrupted her with evil and symbols of danger. Glowing eyes, ratty hair and a row of dangerous teeth illustrate the evil that has possessed the little girl's body. The huge, blood-dripping knife held behind her back alludes to the fiendish act she now tries to conceal from us as her expression seems to say, "Did I do that?" The torn, blood-stained dress adds nicely to the scene.

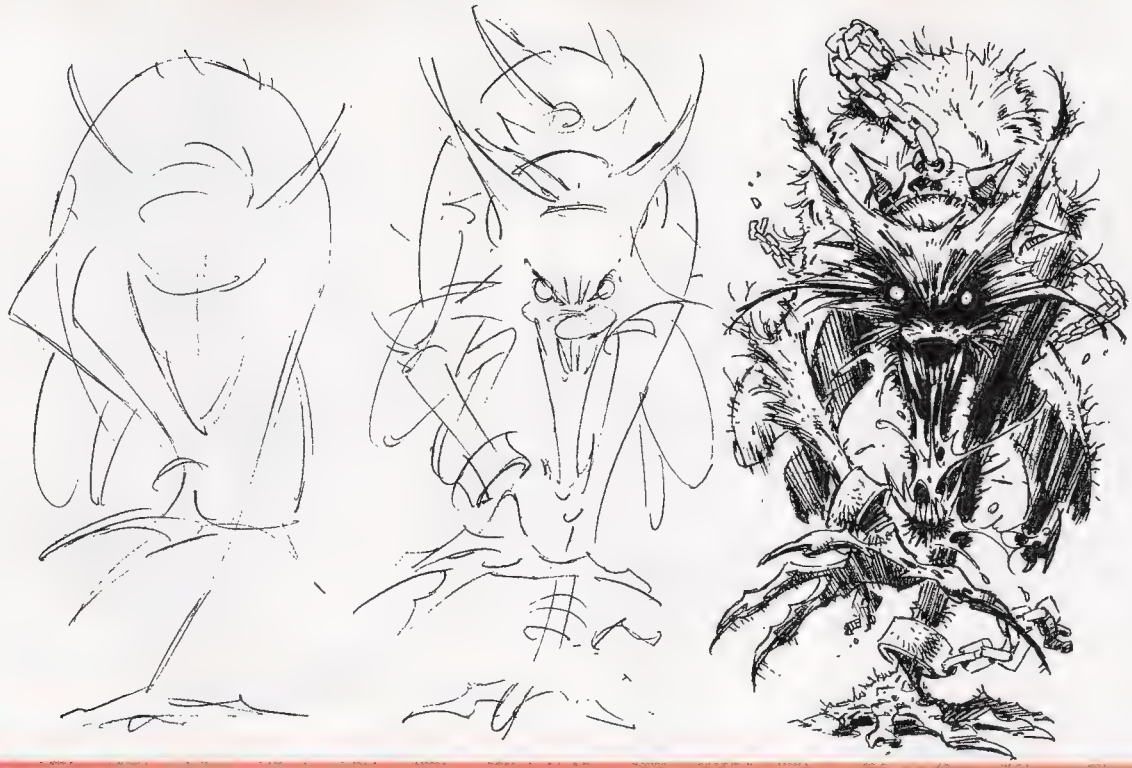


3. ugh

Next we have the walking dead! What Halloween would be complete without zombies? A corpse is a wonderfully gruesome site to behold. Especially if it's still capable of locomotion! Everything you learned in "Krash Course" from *Wizard* #48 titled "The Dark Side" will really be helpful in rendering something like this (or any of these really).

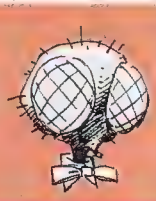
Decay is the name of the game here. Stringy flesh clinging to the skeleton beneath, sunken vacant eyes and long wispy hair are the prerequisite for any good zombie. But entrails—! *Now* we're adding some charm. Swollen intestines cascading from the creature's belly were a joy to draw. (They also served quite nicely in concealing his naughty bits!)

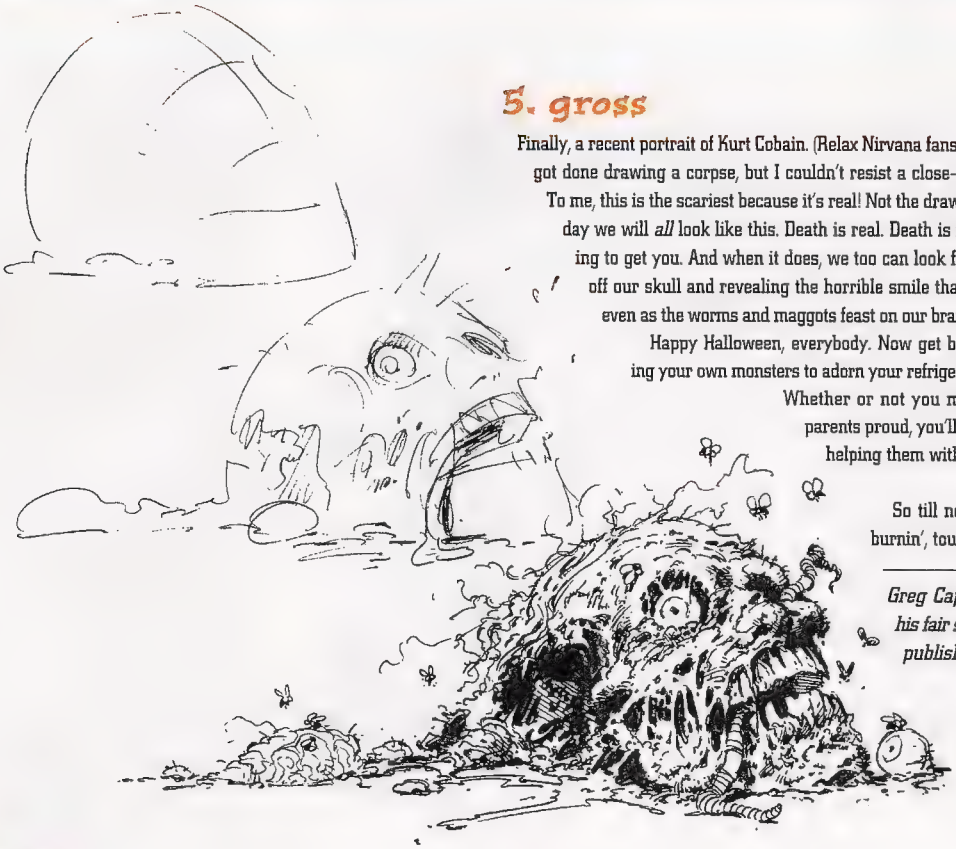
For final touches, I added flies buzzing around to suggest the foul odor present and the untied boots to add to the clumsy motion the thing probably has.



4. eek

Next we have some sort of wild dog-like creature. I made sure to make its face very dark around its beady eyes to give a glowing type effect. Next I gave it huge ears shaped like devil horns to suggest evil. The jaws open extremely wide exposing huge, spiky teeth within its saliva-drenched mouth as it rushes forward to take a bite from its victim. Unlike a dog, it has man-like hands capable of holding you while ripping the juguler vein from your throat. I added the collar and manacles with broken chain to show that this thing is dangerous and, beyond that, it has escaped.





5. gross

Finally, a recent portrait of Kurt Cobain. (Relax Nirvana fans. Just kidding.) I know I just got done drawing a corpse, but I couldn't resist a close-up detail of a rotting head. To me, this is the scariest because it's real! Not the drawing, but the fact that someday we will *all* look like this. Death is real. Death is inescapable. Death is coming to get you. And when it does, we too can look forward to our flesh rotting off our skull and revealing the horrible smile that will remain even as the worms and maggots feast on our brains. .BOO!!! Happy Halloween, everybody. Now get busy drawing your own monsters to adorn your refrigerator with. Whether or not you make your parents proud, you'll at least be helping them with their diet!

So till next month. .Keep the lead burnin', tough guys! **W**

Greg Capullo can be seen doing his fair share of the art on Spawn, *published by Image Comics.*

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Written by T. Casey Brennan
with art by José Gonzalez
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All-New Wrap-around Cover by MICHAEL BAIR

Here There Be Giants!

Vampirella faces the terrible might of a lone monster that will do anything to free itself from its prison! Written by Tom Sniegoski, with pencils by DC super-talent Chris Batista (Steel, Deathstroke) and inks by Caesar (MYSTERY WALK TO VENGEANCE OF VAMPIRELLA)

Sniegoski Batista & Caesar

Cover: Gary Frank / Cam Smith

SHIPPING IN JANUARY '96!

HARRIS COMICS

DRAWING BOARD

Who needs the pros? This is the show for **Wizard Readers' Art**

The eight friendly people whose artwork got an honorable mention this month will each receive a *New Warriors* #50 signed by Fabian Nicieza, a *Legends of the Dark Knight* #0 signed by Joe Quesada and Jimmy Palmiotti and a SkyBox Two-Face SkyMotion card (from the DC Villains Series 2 set). Each of the three kind-hearted runners-up will come away with the cool card, plus a copy of *Generation Next* #1 signed by Chris Bachalo, a *Freak Force* #16 signed by Erik Larsen and an *Azrael* #0 signed by Denny O'Neil. Layron DeJarnette, the ultra-talented artist of the winning entry this month, will receive all that intense stuff, plus an original piece of art by Steven Hughes from the Evil Ernie Chromium card set (thanks heaps, man)! A huge congrats to all of you!

SkyBox

This Redemption card gives you only a *hint* as to what the *real* SkyMotion card looks like!

THE ARTIST

LAYRON DEJARNETTE

THE BOOTY

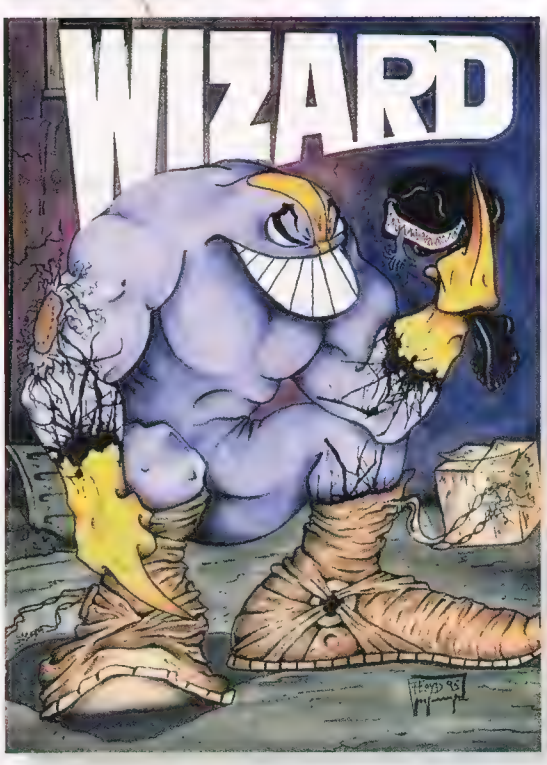
GRAND PRIZE

MR. SINISTER **Layron DeJarnette** Detroit, MI

RUNNERS-UP

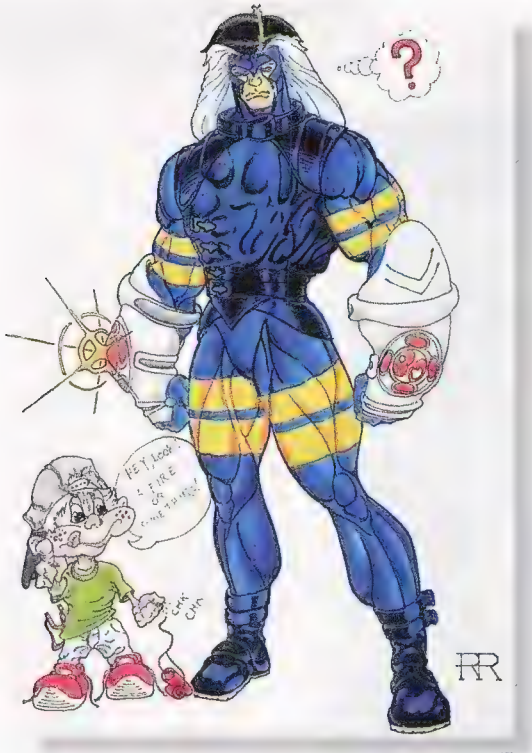
BATMAN ROGUES GALLERY **Ben Chmura** Springbill, FL

LADY RAWHIDE **Ira Haraldson** San Antonio, TX



THE MAXX **Patrick Payne** Pearland, TX

HONORABLE MENTION



ASH & KID DEATH
Rodrigo Ribiero
Glendale, CA

BLOODWULF
Dustin Pruitt
Seat Pleasant, MD

GREEN GOBLIN
Woodrow J. Hinton III
Cincinnati, OH

MAVERICK
Joseph Kuehner
Katy, TX

PSYLOCKE
Bruce A. Mack
Springfield, OH

PITT & TIMMY
Duane Vonada
Hershey, PA

BLOODSHOT VS. SHADOWMAN
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Want your art to appear on one of these four pages in future issues? Think you've got what it takes? (Hey—quality *and* originality count, y'know.) Then send your Drawing Board entries to:

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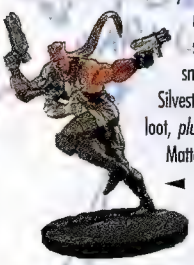
And follow these rules or else: Use any form of unlined paper or posterboard (no larger than 8 inches by 11 1/4 inches) and any medium (oils, crayon, mustard, etc.—but not neon inks). Put your name, full address and TELEPHONE NUMBER on the back of your piece, and mail it flat to avoid damage. All entries are nonreturnable and become the property of Wizard Press. Employees of Wizard Press are the sole judges of the contests, and all decisions are final. Got it? Good luck!

HOMEMADE HEROES

THE ARENA FOR FAN-MADE ACTION FIGURES.

Lurking below are the winning figures in this month's special Halloween edition of Homemade Heroes! Each of the eerily talented creators, all of whom transformed ordinary figures and household materials into these scary specimens, will receive a Mattel toy three-pack and a copy of *Cyberforce #4* signed by Marc Silvestri. The two Runners-Up will get their snazzy three-pack and both *Cyberforce #2* and #4 signed by Mr. Silvestri. The Grand Prize winner scurries off with alla that loot, *plus* a limited-edition Stryker Polystone statue from Mattel. A ghoulish congrats to everyone!



A really big whoppin' thank you goes out to those awesome Mattel folks for their generous donation of prizes. You guys are the cheese on our nachos!

GRAND PRIZE

THE WINNER

GRANT KASHIWABARA

LADY DEATH

"HEY, LOOK...BUBBLE PACKS IN A BUBBLE PACK!"

Solid! A fully packaged (in more ways than one) Lady Death, complete with killer sword! We have absolutely no idea what Grant Kashiwabara, of Honolulu, Hawaii, used to make this awesome babe, but he did a great job. Nice going, Grant.

SECOND PLACE

MR. PUNCH

"ME AM BIZARRO POPE. ME DIG SATAN."

Hope Joel Kimmel of Orleans, Ontario, Canada knew what he was doing when he produced this nefarious, baby-killing creature from Neil Gaiman's *Mr. Punch* graphic novel. The body's made from a peach juice container (!) and fabric, the head from papier-mâché and paint, and most of the face from Styrofoam.

SECOND PLACE

TOO MUCH COFFEE MAN

"WB...NETWORK...EVIL. MUST...KILL...DAMN... SINGING...FROG!"

Attaching an Arthur body from Bandai's Tick line to a head from Kenner's "Killin' Time" Mask, Tom Lotz of Naples, Fla. made this high-quality homage to the caffeinated crusader by topping it all with a Mattel Barbie Air Popcorn Popper and some ever-helpful Super Sculpey!

MORDARE

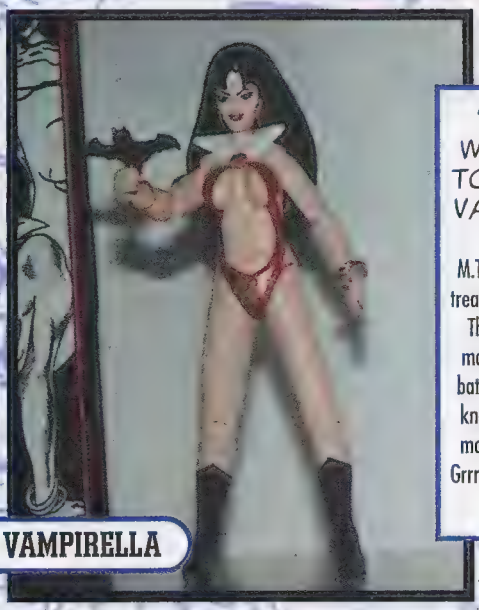
"UGHH...UGGH...AHH! BOY, THAT FIBER STUFF DON'T MESS AROUND."

Hey—the Too Much Coffee Man figure's creator Tom Lotz is back with this creepy creation. We're not sure what the original figure was, but The Eudaemon's main foe still looks pretty darn cool.

FONE BONE

"GOSH, I'M GLAD THAT GIANT RAT THAT'S PERPETUALLY IN HEAT AND SUPPOSEDLY HAUNTS THESE HILLS IS JUST A MYTH. OOOPS, MY SHOE'S UNTIED..."

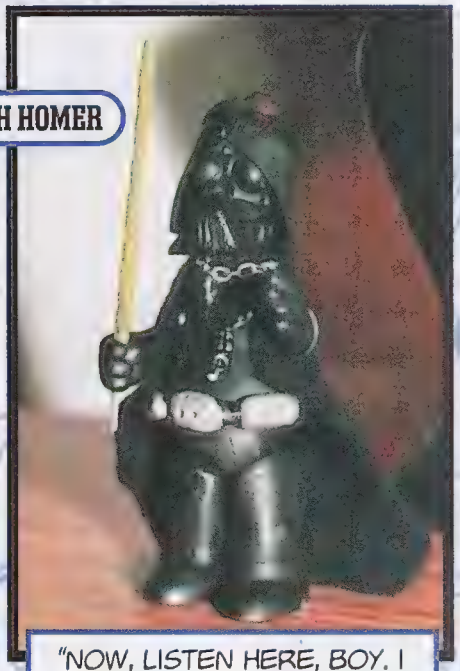
Yeah, Fone Bone's cute, and Mark Jeffery of London, Ontario, Canada did a fine job creatin' him from an "anonymous" McDonald's Happy Meal figure. The rat was made from silly string and an orange lollipop.



VAMPIRELLA

"AND THEN THE WORLD WILL BOW TO THE POWER OF VAM...HEY, WHERE'S MY NAVEL?!?"

M.T. Montano of Sacramento, Calif. treats us to this snappy Vampi figure. The trick is to figure out what he made her—and her friendly little bat—out of, 'cause he didn't let us know (just like half the people this month—a hint to future entrants! Grrr...). But hey, her cuteness easily makes up for that.



DARTH HOMER

"NOW, LISTEN HERE, BOY. I AM SO YOUR FATHER AND IT'S YOUR DESTINY TO RULE BY MY SIDE. OR SOMETHING."

Who'da thought he'd succumb to the Dark Side of the Farts? Ol' Darth here was made from a Homer Simpson figure, courtesy of Mike Lee from Houston, Texas. D'oh!

"SO THE DOCTOR SAYS TO ME, 'WORST CASE OF FOOT-IN-MOUTH DISEASE I'VE EVER SEEN.' BUT SERIOUSLY, FOLKS..."

We don't know how he concocted The Tick's fearsome enemy-turned-ally, but Paul Herwick of Climax, N.Y. says the leg's from a Just Toys Flintstones Betty bendable figure. Yummy!

MAN-EATING COW

HEY!

If you're interested in entering the homemade figure contest, send well-lit, clear, color photographs (No Polaroids!) to:

HOMEMADE HEROES
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PO Box 118
Congers, NY 10920-0118

MYSTERY MAN

Why Dale Keown is the hottest artist you know nothing about

Despite what you may have heard, Dale Keown is alive and well. He's still drawing the adventures of one of Image's most popular heroes. He's just a little behind schedule.

The state of the man's health is pertinent because, well, the rumors have been rampant, have they not? Dale is burnt out. Dale's in drug rehab. Dale has run off with a rock band. He's drunk or in jail. Dale is dead.

The correct answer? None of the above.

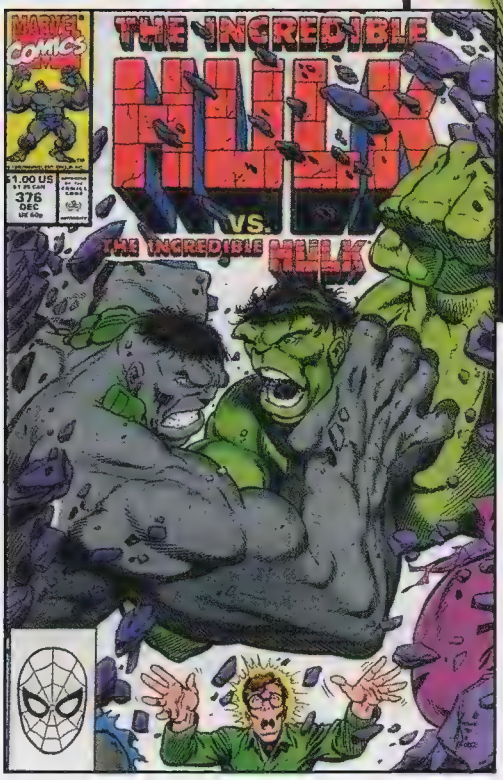
This state of affairs naturally raises the question of exactly how this guy has managed to stay one of the hottest and most popular artists in comics for six years, despite the fact that his creator-owned *Pitt*, from Image Comics, has been one of the most consistently late and erratically published titles on the market. A lot of artists have been roundly castigated for lesser transgressions and forever dumped from the ranks of the favored. It must drive them just a little bit crazy.

Where it's driven me is Toronto, to find out The Truth.

By Jack Curtin • Photos by Carlo Allegri

For Those Who Came In Late: When Dale Keown joined writer Peter David on *The Incredible Hulk* in 1989, he was your basic overnight sensation, one of the hottest among the rising wave of young artists. After a nearly three-year run, he gave in to the blandishments of his pal Todd McFarlane and went off to do his own book for the still embryonic Image Comics. *Pitt* #1 was a triumph, reaffirming his popularity. Then…well, then there was a gap before the second issue. Keown remembers it as "six months or so." Others suggest it might have been close to a year (let the record show that *Pitt* #1 was cover-dated "January" and #2 "July"). In any case, there have been a total of only nine issues to date. That's an average of less than three per year, not exactly the way it's supposed to be, especially for someone who penciled a monthly book for three years.

Keown made his mark on the Hulk.



What happened? That's the question I've come north to ask. That's the reason I'm currently standing in Dale Keown's recently purchased, 103-year-old townhouse in the Cabbagetown section of Toronto. But the guy who bounds down the circular staircase at the far end of the sparsely furnished living room to welcome me to his attractively refurbished studio/residence is not at all what I expected. The only Keown photo I've ever seen is the one that runs periodically with the "Top Ten Hottest Artists" listing in these pages, one which shows a gaunt-faced guy with shoulder-length curly hair and huge tinted glasses, his features dominated by a wide and slightly maniacal smile. The person who greets me is tall, slender, hair neatly trimmed, clad in T-shirt and knee-length shorts, and as friendly and affable as you could want. The mysterious Dale Keown, I discover, is 33 years old. He looks 18, maybe 20 at most, and appears disconcertingly normal. What kind of crazy, irresponsible comic book artist is this anyway?

Apparently a hungry one, so we head out for dinner. Our destination is a local restaurant where we are its only customers. Quickly seated, we ponder the menu before putting together an impressive order.

I let Keown get immersed in pizza, pasta and other goodies and then throw all the various rumors at him like a hail of pellets. "I deny them all," he laughs when I've finished the litany. "Especially the one about being dead."

DALE DISCOVERS HULK

Dale Keown was born in western Canada, specifically, Grand Prairie, Alberta. He grew up there, showing an artistic talent early on. He also discovered comics, his first one being "an issue of *Incredible Hulk* with art by Sal Buscema and Joe Staton. From that point on, Hulk was always my favorite comic character." Art and comics gave way to music by his mid-teens. "I just picked up a bass guitar one day and started learning how to play it, and I really, really got into music—and girls—after that." When he graduated from high school, a band the next town over was looking for a bass player. It was a way out. "Everybody I knew, all my family and relatives, were either farmers or working in the oil business. I didn't want to fall into that pattern."

Bands come and bands go, as bands tend to do. One night in Vancouver, while living with his sister and surviving on local gigs, he wandered into a newsstand and picked up an issue of *Fantastic Four* written and drawn by John Byrne. "I was absolutely stunned. John's work was so detailed, so different from the comics I remembered." Inspired, he started drawing again on the road. Many nights, he roomed with another young musician, Brian Hotton, who wanted to be a writer. "I'd be drawing and he'd be writing. We used to talk about how neat it would be if someday we could do a comic together." Someday would be a number of years away.

It was 1985 and another band folded. Keown was out of work and out of money. While watching the news on TV, he caught a story about Canada's new comic book company Aircel. The next day, he brought them sample Fantastic Four pages that he'd intended

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to submit to Marvel. He was hired on the spot to do a black-and-white martial arts book called *Samurai* and given his own color superhero title, *Dragonforce*, a year later. Aircel eventually merged with Adventure and Eternity (forming the nucleus of what was to become Malibu Comics), resulting in better distribution and more exposure.

Which brings us to veteran inker Joe Rubinstein, who played a key role in Keown's emergence as a superstar. Rubenstein saw Keown's work in an Aircel advertisement and was duly impressed.

"Joe was very instrumental in my career," Keown acknowledges. "He was working on *Marvel Universe Update* at the time and asked Barry Blair [co-owner of Aircel] to have me give him a call. He said my work was very much in the Marvel style and offered me a crack at one of the character pages. I did Rick Jones, but the editor, Greg Wright, I think, didn't much like it. Then Joe made copies of my samples and gave them to all the Marvel editors."

Sadly, the relationship between Keown and Rubinstein has since deteriorated. A dispute over payment and the sharing of artwork from the second and third issues of *Pitt*, which Rubenstein inked (Scott Williams inked part of *Pitt* #2), put them at odds. Keown characterizes the dispute as "a misunderstanding" and is reluctant to discuss it. Rubinstein is a bit more graphic. "Yeah, I gave him his [expletive] career and then got shafted," he says. Then, more graciously, "Ah, he would have had a career in any case; somebody would have discovered him because he was *that* good."

Longtime *Incredible Hulk* editor Bobbie Chase was taken with Keown's samples a great deal, struck especially by "how the characters on the pages interacted very nicely. It was clear that Dale did good body types and very good facial expressions." The two talked about the possibility of his taking over *Sensational She-Hulk* after Byrne left, but that didn't work out. Soon after, she assigned him an issue of *Nth Man*, written by Larry Hama.

"It's ironic in light of what's happened," Keown says, "but I was so eager, that I finished the job and delivered it a full week before the deadline. I wanted to make a good impression and show that I could meet a schedule…" He laughs. "Guess I've shot that reputation down, huh?"

A week later, Chase called offering *The Incredible Hulk*. He was stunned. "Just like that, I'm the regular artist for my favorite character in the whole world. I'm not sure I even believed it until Peter David called to welcome me aboard." His run on the title began with issue #367, the finale to the four-part "Countdown" storyline in which the Hulk is literally wasting away. "We hired Dale because he was so good at drawing big, brawny guys and the first thing he has to draw is an emaciated Hulk," laughs Chase. "But it soon became obvious that it was the right choice."

Said David of the experience: "I had three great years working with Dale. I was sorry when he left but glad we'd had the opportunity to work together for so long. He is a tremendous talent and there are few artists whose work I was more excited to see as the pages came in." The feeling was more than mutual. "It was one of the best times of my life," remembers Keown. "I know that there are people who have had their problems with Marvel, but I was never one of them."

There were those, however, who weren't quite so happy.

"Todd McFarlane invited me up to his home in British Columbia for a weekend in late '91," Keown remembers, "and he spent the whole time talking to me about how Marvel was just this big corporate machine that didn't really care about freelancers and how we all had to think about creating our own characters, our own work. Looking back, I'm not even sure I realized how serious he was about making a break. Of course, he wanted to know if I had a character of my own, and I said yes I did, because I didn't want him to know I'd never ever thought about it. So then I had to rush home and come up with a character quick."

THE BIRTH OF PITT

"Obviously, I find very large, muscular characters appealing, so I started with that," says Keown. "I like claws—claws are cool, especially retractable ones—so I added those. And I know this is strange, but I really, really like to draw mouths. But no matter how hard I tried, I couldn't get the mouth on this guy big enough. It just wouldn't work. And then I thought, 'Aha! If I just get rid of the nose…,'" he laughs. "Anyway, I just had a great time drawing him and did start thinking about doing my own book. Then, when Todd and the others set up Image, I was really torn. I didn't want to leave Bobbie and Peter hanging; issue #400 was coming up and I really wanted to be there for that. But I also figured that if I enjoyed doing *Pitt*, people would have fun seeing it and reading it.

"I find large, muscular characters appealing," Keown says of his creation, Pitt.

In the end, I just had to do it."

Keown didn't make it to the 400th issue, leaving after issue #398. "I offered to stay through #400, but Bobbie decided it was best to make the change right away," he says. "It was all very professional and we parted on good terms." (They did indeed, so much so that this August saw an announcement few would have believed possible: a crossover between an Image and a Marvel title, with Keown and David collaborating on an *Incredible Hulk/Pitt* one-shot scheduled for 1996 release.)

Keown was living in Toronto at that point and hired his old road roomie, Hotton, as *Pitt*'s scripter to help flesh out the character. He neatly honored his immediate past with the *Pitt* supporting cast member Detective Bobbie Harras, named in honor of Chase and fellow Marvel editor Bob Harras.

Pitt made his debut, not in his own title, but as a nine-page backup feature in *Youngblood* #4. "As soon as I agreed to go with Image, Rob [Liefeld] called me up and said I had to do a story for him," Keown explains. That story, plus 10 pages from *Pitt* #1, comprised the November 1992 *Pitt Ashcan*, the first official Full Bleed Studios release (soon to be republished as *Pitt* #1/2, in color and full comic size for the first time). When *Pitt* #1 finally appeared in January 1993, fans were delighted. Image was ecstatic. All was bright and good in Dale Keown's world.

DEADLINE PROBLEMS

Since then, it's been a major hassle. Keown has been spared much of the negative reac-

PITT BOSS

"Dale and I are both working hard to make *Pitt* an eight-times-a-year reality," says new scripter Steve Gerber, whose work on the title began with little fanfare this summer, "and we are going to succeed."

Gerber, whose most famous work has probably been the '70s cult hit *Howard the Duck*, created Sludge for Malibu Comics, scripts *Codename: Stryke Force* for Image's Top Cow Productions and is currently working on a *Cybernary* mini-series for WildStorm Productions. His relationship with Keown goes back to a phone call he made in 1993.

"Dale reminded me of the call when he asked that I take over writing *Pitt*," he says. "I'd completely forgotten about it, since we never actually spoke. I just told his answering machine that I liked *Pitt* a lot. Like *Spawn* and *Savage Dragon*, it's a single character book with a highly individualistic style and attitude that separates it not only from the Marvel and DC stuff, but even the other Image books.

"And *Pitt* is beautifully drawn. The visual contrast that Dale creates by balancing the alien look of the character and the gritty feel of the stories against Timmy's innocence is wonderful. I like the fact that there is genuine humor in the book that grows directly out of the characters."

Keown says that his original intent in approaching Gerber was to take the book in a new direction, but the writer has convinced him that, in fact, "there is an unresolved universe of possibilities in the existing storyline. In the first issue I scripted [*Pitt* #9], we started looking at Pitt's origins, but we've only told half that story so far. Coming up will be what Dale and I call 'The Adventures of Li'l Pitt.' Where did he grow up? What was his childhood like with Zoyvod as a father? How did he end up on Jereb's planet and what turned him against Zoyvod? What is the exact nature of the bond between Timmy and Pitt, and what happened to Timmy's parents? What exactly are the Creed? As a reader of *Pitt*, these are things I wanted to know, and I suspect most of Dale's readers feel the same way."

That said, Gerber acknowledges that the story will also branch off into other directions. "There are new villains on the horizon and new characters associated in one way or another with those villains. We will eventually see more of Axiom and we plan to develop some of the characters we've already met, like Grampa—who has a rather interesting past and who wouldn't mind having a future—and Timmy's friends and enemies at school. Pitt's new canine pal will become a regular and I think you can safely assume that Jereb will turn up again one of these days. Over the next year or so, it's my hope that Dale and I will develop a cast of characters which is as rich in story potential as that of the early Spider-Man books."

The focus of *Pitt*, Gerber promises, will continue to be the relationship between its two primary characters, taken to a new level of sophistication.

"Up to now, Pitt's bond with Timmy has largely consisted of rescuing him from one peril or another," he says. "We're going to move far, far beyond that and deal with the psychological dimensions and complexities of their relationship. Pitt and Timmy are both innocents whose lives have been thrust into conflict with cosmic forces that neither of them completely understand. How they deal with that, and with the link that exists between them, is what the story is all about."

tion most "late" artists suffer, but his erratic schedule is a matter of concern to him. "Part of the problem is that I'm a real perfectionist," he contends. "Before this, I was just an artist; all I had to worry about was getting the art down on the pages and telling the story in the best way I could. Once I became a businessman too, I had all this other stuff to worry about in addition to the work itself and I got bogged down."

He'll further admit, if pressed, that just maybe his musical interests might have contributed to the slowdown. "I did indulge myself a little too much after the first issue came out," he says sheepishly. "When I started doing *Incredible Hulk*, all my bills were paid and I still had money left over for the first time in my life. So, I bought all the top-level musical gear that I could never afford when I was actually playing music professionally. I had recording units, guitars and amplifiers all over the place, and Brian and I started thinking about some sort of Pitt-related musical project. We spent a lot of time working on that."

Pitt's other star: Timmy

"That" is the Pitt Compact Disk, 10 songs written by Keown and Hotton, and performed by them and three other musicians (they called themselves The Pitt Crew). A 42-minute master disk exists, but release has been "postponed indefinitely" as a side effect of Full Bleed's recent and surprising split from Image (see sidebar).

BACK ON TRACK

About a year ago, Keown hired former artist's representative Phil Foxhoven as his exclusive agent to handle the business aspects of Keown's Full Bleed Studios. More recently, after having penciled and inked every one of the first eight issues of *Pitt*, except #2 and #3, Keown decided to employ a regular inker on the book. Billy Tan and Mark Farmer did issue #9 and, as it turns out, *Wizard* is right on the scene the moment Keown discovers the man for the permanent job. FedEx arrives midway through our interview and Keown anxiously rips open the top package, then literally yelps with delight. "Oh, wow! Look at that! Is that great, or what?" He holds up the finished art for the cover to *Pitt* #1/2, from inker Dan Panosian. "That's just wonderful." Several days later, in a phone conversation, he confirms the obvious: Panosian has been signed as regular inker, starting with issue #10.

Finally, old pro Steve Gerber debuted as *Pitt*'s new scripter with #9. "It had nothing to do with the quality of Brian Hotton's work and the change was completely amicable," Keown explains. "I just felt I had to have an established veteran writer to keep me in the rhythm necessary to get the book out every two months like I want to."

We are left, in the end, not with an answer, but with a promise. Will it all work out? Will *Pitt* become a model of timeliness and publishing decorum? What effect will the split from Image have? All remains to be seen. One thing is now clear, however. You can chalk this up as fact, not rumor: Dale Keown, at the very least, has it all in perspective.

"I've been lucky," he concludes. "Sometimes I just want to pinch myself, remembering cold nights in Alberta or being hungry in some hotel room. Now I have the chance to create something out of nothing, to translate the world I see in my head onto paper.

"Sometimes it doesn't always work out the way I pictured it, but it's always fun. What keeps me going is knowing that the next book will look better than the one before it. I think that's what keeps every artist going—better pencils, better storytelling, a better product every time. I think my readers stay with me because they sense that I really care what the book looks like. I try to put everything I can into each page." W

Jack Curtin made a clean break across the Canadian border with 16 oranges, 10 cases of booze and a Chihuahua. Unfortunately, the authorities confiscated the 80 pounds of bacon he had hidden in the trunk.

GETTING A NEW IMAGE

Dale Keown's unexpected announcement just before Labor Day that he was withdrawing *Pitt* and all Full Bleed Studios products from Image Comics and would begin self-publishing this December was not just a sudden whim or spur-of-the-moment decision, he says.

"I've wanted to try this for some time now. Whenever anyone would ask me why I didn't publish *Pitt* myself instead of going through Image, I didn't have any answer. I finally sat down in August and decided that there wasn't any reason not to give it a try—so here I go."

Full Bleed's Business Manager Phil Foxhoven says that he has already negotiated distribution contracts for *Pitt*. The revised schedule calls for *Pitt* #1/2 to be released in December and *Pitt* #10 to be released in January 1996. Even though this will mean another four-month gap between published issues (*Pitt* #9 was scheduled to ship in August), Foxhoven stresses that Keown is committed to maintaining a bimonthly schedule as soon as he can. The artist himself goes so far as to argue that this latest postponement will actually help him meet that goal.

"Yes, this throws us behind one more time," admits Keown, "and I'm sure that is disappointing to some people. But it also allows me time to get an issue or two under my belt so that we start off ahead of the game. The important thing for my fans to realize is that they shouldn't be concerned that there will be some big change or anything. I'm still penciling, Steve Gerber is still writing, Dan Panosian is still inking and Steve Oliff is still coloring. The only difference anyone should notice at all is that the publisher's box up in the left-hand corner of the cover will have changed."

Keown says he wants it made clear that his move did not reflect any overt dissatisfaction with Image or its founders. "Sure, we had some disagreements now and then," he says, "usually when Pitt would pop up some place that hadn't been approved by me, but that's not the reason I'm doing this. I'm not upset with Image or anybody there. I think those guys are great. They gave me a chance to get started doing my own character, my own comic. This is just something I had to do on my own sooner or later. It's very exciting and I can't wait to get started."

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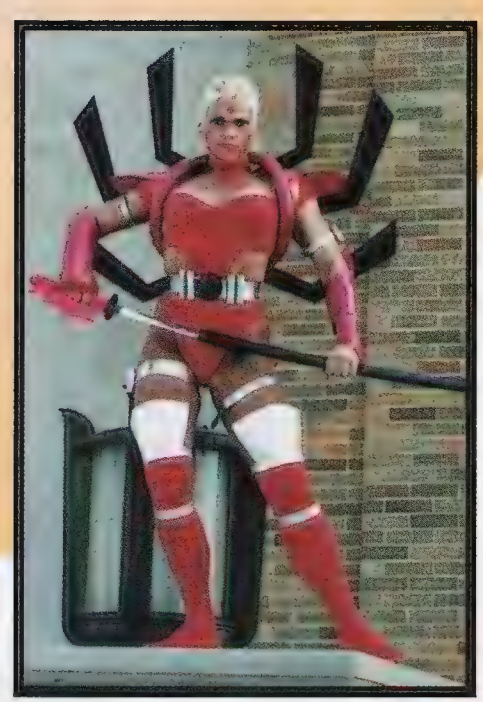
All Dressed

The winners of the fourth annual *Wizard* Halloween Costume Contest

A *LOT* OF FREAKS THIS YEAR. AFTER SPREADING THE HUNDREDS OF ENTRIES WE RECEIVED ALL OVER THE FLOOR, GIGGLING LIKE SCHOOLGIRLS AND OCCASIONALLY WINCING IN FEAR, WE ARE PROUD TO PRESENT THE *CREME DE LA CREME* OF MISFITS, FREAKS AND LUNATICS.

SINCE WE'RE SURE YOU WANT TO KNOW, EVERYONE WHO APPEARS ON THESE PAGES WINS A LADY DEATH CHROMIUM TRADING CARD SIGNED BY BRIAN PULIDO AND STEVEN HUGHES, A SPIDER-MAN ANIMATION ACETATE SIGNED BY STAN LEE, A *WARRIORS OF PLASM* #1 SIGNED BY JIM SHOOTER, AND A COMIC SIGNED BY DAN JURGENS (EITHER *SUPERMAN, SOLAR* OR *ZERO HOUR*)! AND SOME FOLKS GET ALL THOSE GOODIES AND MUCH MORE. BUT ENOUGH OF THAT—WE'RE OFF!



"I'll bag at least four hanggliders from up here before the cops pick me off. Cool."
ZEALOT
***Julie Gordon**, Panama City, FL*
Costume by Brian Parsley

"Y'know, this Great Adventure Drive-Thru Safari is gettin' waaaay out of hand."
CARNAGE
***Jason Senior**, Weedville, PA*

"Mervyn? Who the @?$ is Mervyn? How 'bout I kick yer ass?"*
LORD PUMPKIN
***Javier Santos**, Parlier, CA*

Up with No Place to Go

"Ugh. Get lost, creep. I don't date guys with unibrows."
LADY RAWHIDE
***Michele Alexandra**, Columbus, OH*

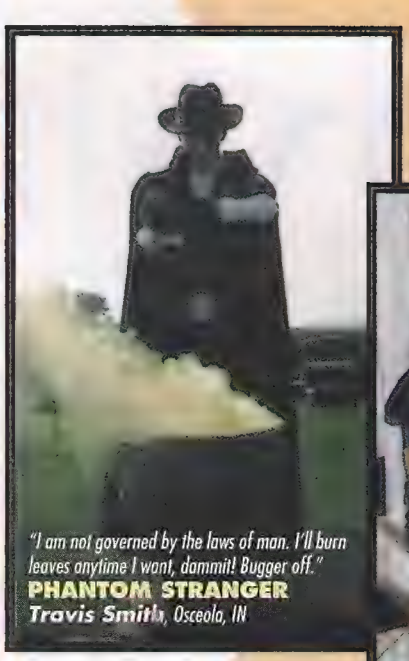
"Sigh. Venom. Carnage. That's all the kids talk about nowadays. Hey, Oprah's on!"
HOBGOBLIN
***Ron Bedra**, Northwood, OH*

WAAAY-TOO-MUCH-FREE-TIME AWARD
***Jon Cremeans**, Troy, OH*

Yo, Joe! When not making the world safe for democracy by posing next to wooden crates and dressing like a doll, Jon…well, that's pretty much all Jon does. But for being cool enough to go the extra mile with so many neat, creative costumes, he walks off with our special G.I. Joe prize, consisting of an army of G.I. Joe action figures, including the Dynamite, General Blitz, Combat Sgt. Savage, D-Day and Jungle Camo D-Day figures, plus the Sgt. Savage P-40 Warhawk with Pilot Sgt. Savage. (Whew!) Thanks to the good people at Hasbro, Inc. for their donation of the Kenner G.I. Joe products! And kudos to Jon for all his work!

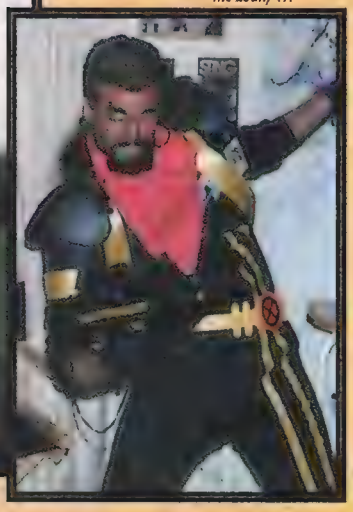
TUSKEN RAIDER
Michael Groves, [illegible]

DARTH VADER
Henry Hall, *Bradenton, FL*



"I am not governed by the laws of man. I'll burn leaves anytime I want, dammit! Bugger off."
PHANTOM STRANGER
Travis Smith, *Osceola, IN*

"Whoop. Whoop. Whoop. Bishop is in the hoouuuuse!"
Nathan MacDicken, *Mc Lean, VA*



BOBA FETT
David Foster, *East Eddington, ME*

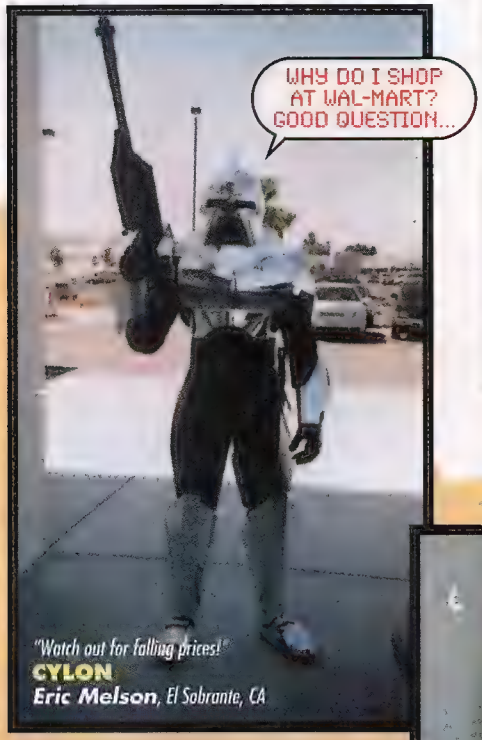
USE THE FORCE WHEN I SAVING

Use the Force, Luke! Yeee-ha! A special tip of the blast-shield to the fans that dressed up as *Star Wars* characters, especially since we got two (count 'em, two!) Boba Fetts! And two Vaders! And speaking of the Fetts, David Foster will get all this stuff for his radical rendition: a Topps *Star Wars* Wide-vision card set on an uncut sheet (courtesy of Topps, of course) and an uncut sheet of Star Wars Galaxy Walt Simonson Etched-Foil chase cards. Rip those Jedi up, David!

"From up here I can see...Hey, what are Logan and Bishop doing in the upstairs bathroom? Whoa...they are mutants!"
Kit Patrick, *Panama City, FL*
Costume by Brian Parsley

STAR WARRIORS (from Hercules, CA)
The Fett: Sarah Van Winkle, Darth: Leo Garcia, Stormy: Tim Catanach, Leia: Linda Cisneros, Luke: Charles Chapman, Han: Wolfgang Moll

"Yes...yes!! Smell my most intimate of areas. I am...moist."
MAN-BAT
Keith A. Arbuthnot, *Calgary, Alta., Canada*

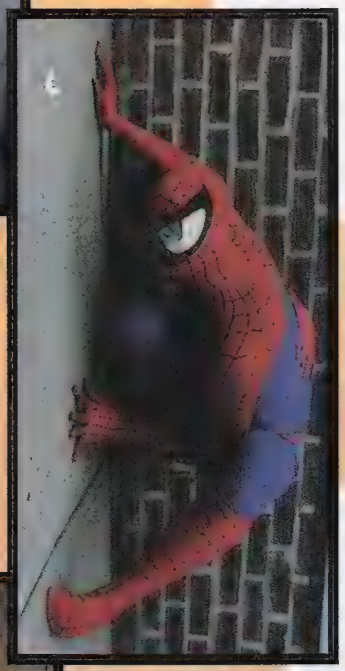


"Watch out for falling prices!"
CYLON
Eric Melson, El Sobrante, CA

"Ohhh, Logan. There's somethin' I've gotta tell you..."
MARVEL GIRL
Lisa Caulfield, Las Vegas, NV

BELLY-OF-FEAR AWARD
Stephen J. Angeli, Fremont, CA
No comment.

"What odd architecture. Vertical bricks...a sidewalk-like wall...I smell Mysterio's hand in this! Really, I do."
Gregory Beigel, Laurel, MD

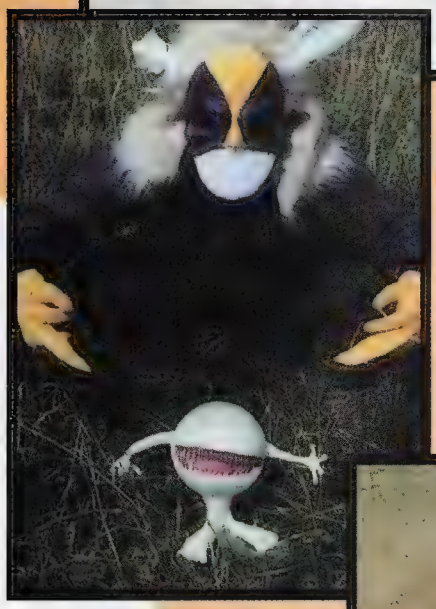


"Jehovah's what? We don't understand. Regardless, you will be assimilated."
BORG
Heiko Wrusch, Lohmar, Germany

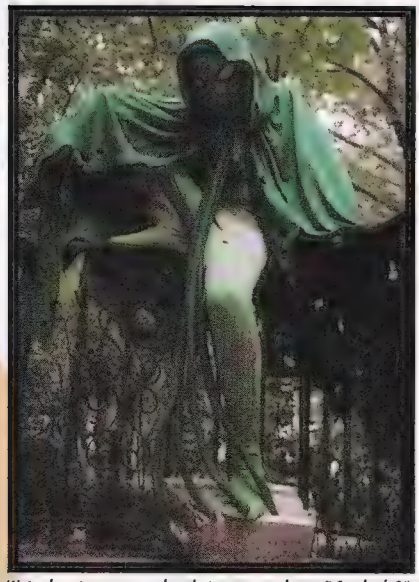
"Hey, honey, nice gams! Where ya goin', baby? I ain't through checking you out yet!"
Ryan Purvis, Strongsville, OH

"First they kill me, then they put me on trial for the destruction of Krypton and now this! What the hell's wrong with DC?"
Rob Van Loeuen, Comstock Park, MI

"Now, with my amazing cosmic ray-spawned powers, I'll change the color of my shirt mid-sleeve!"
MR. FANTASTIC
***Josh Beck**, Cedar Rapids, IA*



"C'mere, ya little...Whoop...Oh damn. Squatting after a Taco Bell lunch wasn't a good idea. Hope Julie has some Wet-Naps."
THE ALIEN
***James M. Gill**, Carrolltown, PA*

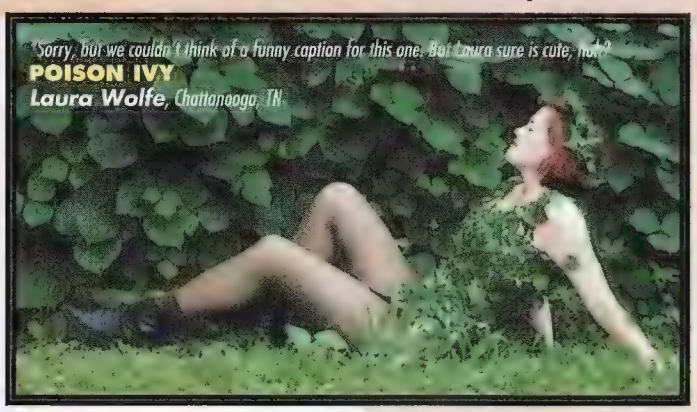


"No, I'm not the Spider-Clo...Wait, does it pay more than being a second-rate DC nobody?"
RAGMAN
***Ezra Koenig**, Glen Ridge, NJ*

Bang! Get it? The gun says "Bang!" Ah, this joke is older than Bob Kane."
THE JOKER
***Erik Von Troy**, Santa Monica, CA*

"Mmm, Chee-tos."
ALIEN
***Natasha Mleynek**, Evergreen, CO*

"What? Where am I? I'm in Wizard now? Jesus Christ, can my continuity be any more screwed up?"
HAWKMAN
***Dan Kelly**, Prince Frederick, MD*

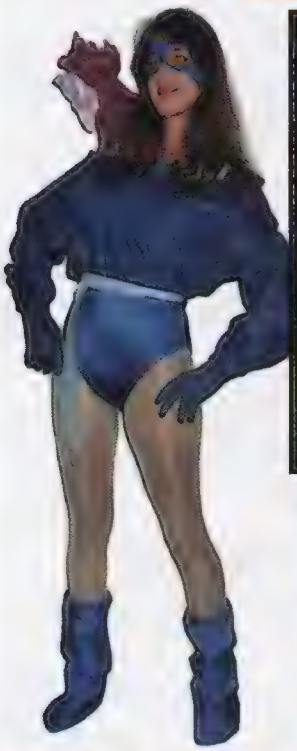


"Sorry, but we couldn't think of a funny caption for this one. But Laura sure is cute, no?"
POISON IVY
***Laura Wolfe**, Chattanooga, TN*

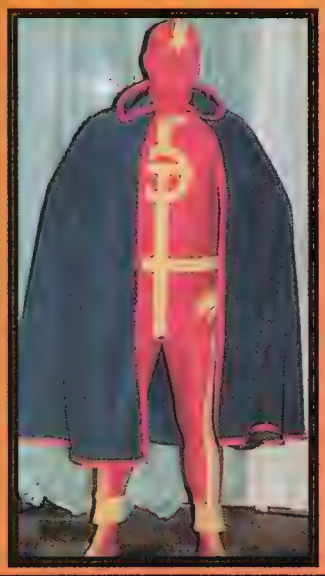
KITTY PRYDE & LOCKHEED
Elizabeth Reuter, Bedford, IN
"C'mon, Peter. I've forgiven you for that traitor thing and I'm not even jailbait anymore."

THE WHOLE ENTIRELY INFORMATIVE & HIGH-TORNADO COSTUME AWARD

Wow. To say these were kick-ass costumes is an understatement. Awesome job! For impressing the hell out of us, we're sending the J.L.M. (Justice League Maryland) here an extra-special prize: a whole slew of Justice League posters, five *Justice League Archives* books signed by Julie Schwartz and Murphy Anderson and limited to 250 copies (courtesy of DC—thanks, folks!), plus a page of original *Justice League America* art, courtesy of artist Chuck Wojtkiewicz!
You know, to tell the truth, these amazing-looking guys from Millersville, Md. almost won. For a peek at the OTHER superteam that nudged 'em out of the top slot, just turn the page.



AQUAMAN: Joe Bury
BATMAN: Quinten Dustin
BLACK CANARY: Shannon McCartney
BLUE BEETLE: Kevin McCartney (Leader)
BOOSTER GOLD: Robert McCartney
CAPTAIN MARVEL: Tom Brogan
FIRE: Jenn Granger
FLASH: Robert McCartney
GREEN LANTERN: Kevin Urban
HUNTRESS: Jaime Lord
ICE (Individual): Melissa Seirsen
ICE (Group): Whitney Rudolph
MISTER MIRACLE: Charles Frazier Jr.
RED TORNADO: Greg Granger
ROBIN: Mark Dunaway
SUPERMAN: Matt LaChappell
WONDER WOMAN: Bonnie Dolle



"They're not tights! They're just form-fitting! Now take it back!"
GRENDEL-PRIME
***Geoffrey Brown**, Scituate, MA*

GRAND PRIZE WINNER

Stop yer grinnin' and drop yer linen, we gots us a winnuh! According to Scott Crawford, the designer of all these incredible costumes, "Most of them are basically just spandex. The Wolverine has retractable claws that really go in and out. I've got an electronic flash built into the Cyclops visor, so you can actually hit a button that fits in the palm of your hand and it'll cause it to flash. The visor is made of fiberglass, and the Archangel wings are old mini-blinds."

As for his current projects, Scott is in the process of "working on Colossus and, about three weeks ago, I was in a fabric store and I found some blue fur, so I'm going to try and get a Beast suit together too."

ARCHANGEL: Joe Boudrie
CYCLOPS: Jason Snyder
GAMBIT: Devin Hazelett
JEAN GREY: Deb Weddelman
NIGHTCRAWLER: Dominic Ciarico
PSYLOCKE: Deb Weddelman
ROGUE: Michele Heonis
STORM: Kim Guest
WOLVERINE: Scott Crawford

For stomping the competition this year, Scott Crawford & Co. of Columbus, Ohio win a thunderous amount of prizes, topped by an Aiwa stereo system (including a CD player and much more), along with videotapes of horror movies, CD horror movie soundtracks, and loads of horror novels! Eee-yeooow, what a reward!

And that was that. Thanks to everyone who entered, and don't be discouraged if your photo didn't make it in. You may find yourself popping up elsewhere in future issues of the mag, and if all else fails...there's always next year!

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Tales from the Crypt

Horror writer Alan Moore carves a new Image with Spawn and WildC.A.T.s

The name Alan Moore commands respect. Associated with that name are modern comic book classics like *Watchmen*, *Swamp Thing*, *Batman: The Killing Joke*, and the subsequent praise that he's won along the way.

One of the more prominent figures in the "British Invasion" of American comics during the early 1980s, Moore proved to the mainstream media that superhero comic books aren't just for children and can indeed provoke thought among older readers.

But at the height of his commercial success in the late '80s, Moore turned his back on the mainstream. He stopped doing interviews, stopped attending conventions and concentrated on producing more alternative and mature books.

Since returning to the mainstream in 1993, Moore now confronts a new audience, one that's unaware of his prior accomplishments and only knows him as the writer of Image Comic's *Spawn* and *WildC.A.T.s*. And he's even agreed to do an interview.

So, on a sunny day in September, I journeyed up to Alan's hometown of Northampton, England, to talk with him over lunch at a local pub. Over the next couple of hours we make ourselves comfortable and discuss the entire range of Alan's career, from his beginnings as an underground cartoonist to his return to writing superheroes.

by Peter Hogan
Photos by Bob Martin

WIZARD: Most people think of you as a writer, but you actually began as a cartoonist, didn't you?

ALAN MOORE: I began as an *attempt* at a cartoonist! Delusions of adequacy, I think they call it. I eventually got work doing a regular strip on a biweekly basis for an Oxford underground paper called *Backstreet Bugle*. No pay was involved, but it meant that I got a page every two weeks to show off my dubious cartooning skills. However, you do that for nine or 10 episodes, and you're gonna learn something. I didn't learn a lot about drawing; I mainly learned something about panel-to-panel progression.

It was at this point—around 1979—that I decided to try and make a living at this, and I sent in some stuff to the British rock music papers.

During the same time, I was making up the rest of my meager income by doing the "Maxwell the Magic Cat" strip for the local paper, the *Northampton Post*. Eventually, I asked Steve Moore, who was the only comic writer I knew, if he could give me a few tips on how to lay out a script, and if he'd have a look at my first efforts. Which he did, and those first efforts found their way into *2000 A.D.* through Alan Grant, who was their sub-editor at the time and probably one of the best they ever had. I started doing things for Marvel UK, and things developed from there.

Your first major work was your updating of Marvelman later known as Miracleman. Had you discovered the character when you were a kid?

Yeah, because I used to devour *everything* on the stands. American superhero comics were few and far between—you'd buy the Marvel ones, then you'd buy the DC ones, then you'd buy the DC ones you weren't really interested in, like *Tomahawk*. Then you'd be getting down to *Casper the Friendly Ghost*, *Archie* and *Veronica*...and some days when things got really desperate, you'd actually pick up one of these flimsy little copies of *Marvelman*. But they were part of my childhood, and have a kind of aura around them—because even though Marvelman was not an original superhero, he was an iconic British superhero. He was the closest that *we'd* ever had.

It was also fairly dumb, as superhero concepts go. Was that part of the appeal—did you think, "If I can make *this* more mature, it might lead somewhere?"

Well, I'd always thought—since reading Harvey Kurtzman's *Superduperman* parody—that it would be possible to do some interesting things with conventional comic book characters. The thing that impresses you about that story is that when the real world and the concerns of the real world impinge upon the artificial world of the superhero, then you sometimes get some quite funny, poignant or interesting things happening. Kurtzman did it for humorous effect, but the possibility struck me that by turning the screw the other way, it could have all sorts of effects. I thought, "Wouldn't it be nice to take some charming old superhero and apply the real world to him?"

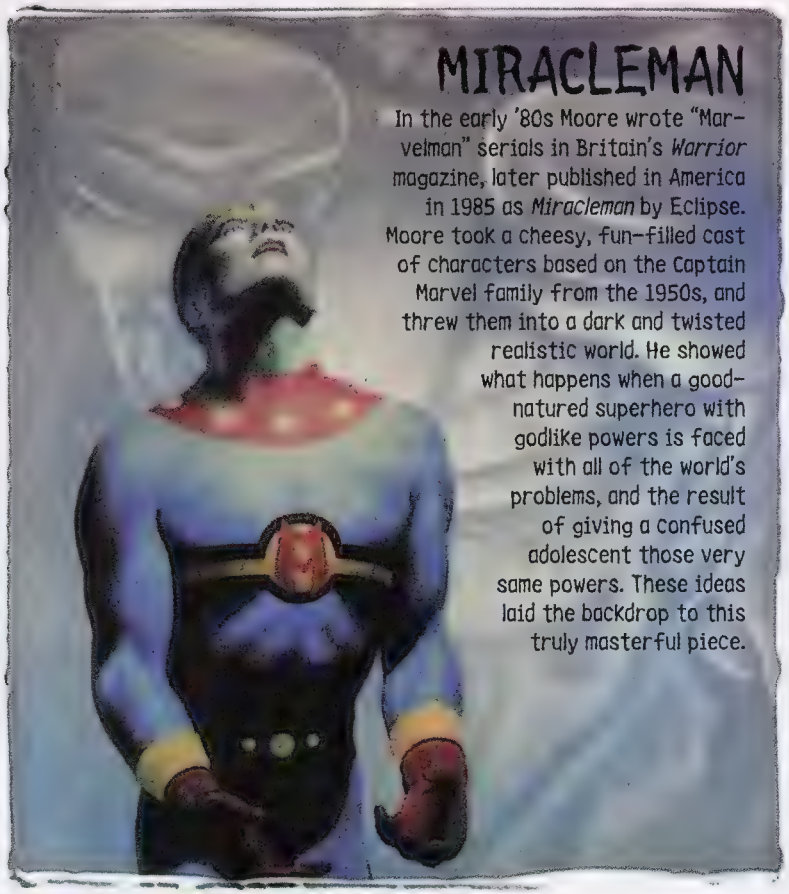
Do you think that the way you handled all that was what caused DC to hire you to write *Swamp Thing*?

That was probably a factor, in that I'd shown I could write superhero comics in a way that they didn't. I think that at this time they hadn't seriously thought about using British scriptwriters. I think they thought, "*2000 A.D.*'s kind of cool, but they couldn't write superheroes." But with *Marvelman*, I was writing something that was close enough to a traditional superhero for them to recognize, but different enough to tantalize. And *Swamp Thing*'s sales were dropping, which gave me a perfect ground to go in there and do what I wanted. Because I couldn't really mess anything up.

Were you pleased that it was a horror title? Was that something you wanted to try?

No. I was pleased because it was DC Comics, and represented a significant step forward for me in terms of what I'd be able to do in comics. I would no longer be constrained by eight-page stories and black-and-white art. Also, I'd been reading DC comics since I was seven, and it was great to have a chance to play in that universe. Which I did—they let me go berserk, eventually.

But *Swamp Thing* was not a book that I'd have chosen. I don't know what I'd have chosen—probably *Challengers of the Unknown*, or something a bit more neutral. *Swamp Thing* had a very strong identity, in terms of the very excellent Len Wein and Bernie Wrightson stuff from the '70s. But, having it thrown at me, I picked



MIRACLEMAN

In the early '80s Moore wrote "Marvelman" serials in Britain's *Warrior* magazine, later published in America in 1985 as *Miracleman* by Eclipse. Moore took a cheesy, fun-filled cast of characters based on the Captain Marvel family from the 1950s, and threw them into a dark and twisted realistic world. He showed what happens when a good-natured superhero with godlike powers is faced with all of the world's problems, and the result of giving a confused adolescent those very same powers. These ideas laid the backdrop to this truly masterful piece.

A BLAST FROM THE PAST.

X-O MANOWAR. IN NOVEMBER.

59 & 60: X-O TAKES ON UNCLE SAM.
THE ADVENTURES OF A SAVAGE BARBARIAN WITH THE WORLD'S MOST POWERFUL WEAPON.
BY BART SEARS AND ANDY SMITH.

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up the ball and ran with it.

Once you got under way, you explored a good many themes—especially during the "American Gothic" story, which ran from *Swamp Thing* #38–#50, where it seemed like you were going through a checklist of all the different horror ingredients.

Yeah, I was deliberately doing exactly that: werewolves, vampires, zombies, haunted houses, all the rest of 'em. With *Swamp Thing*, I'd got some ideas of how to revamp the character, I wanted to re-situate him in the DC Universe and give him a reason for being there, and there were some technical things I wanted to try. I wanted to see if you could do an erotic mainstream comic, that was just all a love story. So we did that [in #34] and then we had to start thinking, "Now what?"

Having established Swamp Thing in a different area of the horror universe, I wanted to see what happened if we revisited other well established places on the horror map with a different sensibility. And I thought it might be nice to run through the whole gamut of the Universal Films back catalog of horror icons, and that all grew into "American Gothic." It had some problems...one of which was *Crisis on Infinite Earths* happening halfway through it [with a crossover in issue #46], which throws you off a little bit. Not all the stories in that arc worked, but some of them—like "The Curse" [#40]—still remain among my favorites.

When you finally left the title, did you feel it had just come to a natural end?

I did feel that, and I still do. I'd gone as far as I could on *Swamp Thing*. We'd tried to make him work as a horror character, a science-fiction character, a superhero character. By the time we came to the end I couldn't think of anything else to do with him. And I felt it rounded it off quite nicely just having him wander off into the swamp and live with his Mrs.

Watchmen was kind of based on the old Charlton characters. On some level, was there an affection for those Charlton characters coming through?

Well, there was a nostalgic affection for superheroes in general. That pervades *Watchmen*. No matter how bleak and grim some of it is, comics themselves are nostalgically reflected on. The original Night Owl's got a pet dog called Phantom who wears a mask, and that's affection for Ace the Bat-Hound and all of those stupid comic book traditions. I think I've always been fairly affectionate with superheroes. I know I've got a reputation for doing horrible things with them, but just because you do horrible things with somebody doesn't mean you don't like 'em.

SWAMP THING

With DC Comics' *Saga of the Swamp Thing* #21 in 1983, Moore redefined the horror story in comics. Along with artists Steve Bissette and John Totleben, he brought werewolves, vampires and angry spirits into the modern and gothic world that Swamp Thing exists in. But he did something else. He wrote of the psychological and emotional horrors that consumed a plant creature. Swamp Thing, who eventually become a veritable god by reaching Plant Elemental status, faced the unnerving truth that he was not in fact a human being transformed into a plant; he was instead, a plant that *thought* it had been human. This wake-up call sparked the beginning of a long and wondrous journey into the life and soul of Swamp Thing.

But after *Watchmen*, it seemed like you were done with superheroes for a while...

I was done with superheroes as a means of serious expression. At the time, I no longer felt that if I'd got something important to say, superheroes were a suitable vehicle for it. I still feel like that. If I've got something important to say, I'm more likely to do it in something like *From Hell*. But that's not to say I always want to be concerned with serious ideas.

What about *From Hell*? Are you trying to do the ultimate whodunnit?

No. Probably the opposite of that. In *From Hell*, you *know* whodunnit in the second episode. I think the whodunnit aspect of Jack the Ripper is completely unimportant. It's not important *who* did it. The important thing is that *we don't know* who did it. This has allowed Jack the Ripper to escape human dimensions and become an astonishingly huge, dark mythical figure. It's that myth I'm trying to explore. I don't know if it was William Gull [Queen Victoria's Royal Physician]. He was probably a nice old guy who did an awful lot of good for women—he was the guy who discovered anorexia, among other things—and I'm probably slandering him awfully by repeating [author] Stephen Knight's claim that he was the Whitechapel murderer. I'm just interested in the mythology of what happened—those people, those times, those events, that London. And all of the threads of fable and rumor and myth and legend and lie that comes out of them. That spiderweb, that pattern, with Jack the Ripper squatting in the center.

After you left DC you started keeping a low profile—you stopped doing interviews and stopped going to conventions. Was this just because you'd had enough of it?

I think that was partly a reaction to the position that *Watchmen* was putting me in. I

DeVries
Nelson
Scanlan
Patelis
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Nelson
Scanlan
Patelis

WATCHMEN

Written by Moore and drawn by Dave Gibbons, DC's 12-issue *Watchmen* redefined the way many looked at superhero comics when it ran its course from 1985-86.

Set in a 1985 where Richard Nixon is still President and '60s fashion reigned supreme, *Watchmen* took a realistic view of the world had superheroes truly existed in it. Wars are won by superbeings, the police riot after believing their roles usurped, government intervention bans masked "heroes"...all of these shape the world of *Watchmen*.

Like classic literature, Moore proved it possible to effectively use metaphor, irony, foreshadowing and flashbacks in a comic book. In order to truly enjoy *Watchmen*, it requires multiple readings for those who wish to notice the fine details of the story and art that further lend to the series' texture.

was getting loads of offers to appear on television, people wanted me to be on celebrity quiz shows...and the growing insanity of it was starting to get to me. The horror of conventions where I'd get there and spend most of my time cowering in the hospitality room, simply because I couldn't face going out and having to relate to hundreds of people. And also, for personal reasons, I just wanted to hang out in Northampton, where I could feel normal and where people would still treat me exactly the same. That was why I withdrew from the public eye, and I'm very glad I did. I couldn't be happier.

I suppose *Spawn* was the first thing that lured you back into the limelight—how did that come about?

[*Spawn* creator] Todd McFarlane rang me up and asked me to write an issue. I thought, "Well, I've got nothing against writing superheroes as long as it's just a bit of excitement and a bit of fun for teenagers, with a few laughs for myself thrown in." Also, there was the money, of course—I'd be lying if I said that wasn't a factor. But there again, I've been offered plenty of big money jobs that I've turned down for lack of interest. If it was only the money, then I wouldn't have turned down writing the *RoboCop* films.

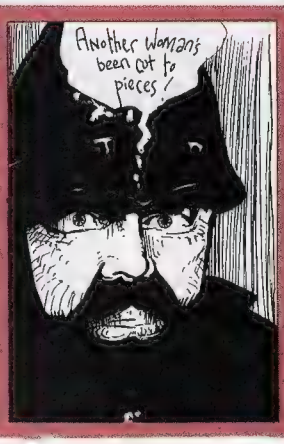
In the case of Image, what appealed to me was the fact that they seemed to have ripped a huge chunk of meat out of the flank of Marvel Comics. I admired that. They'd gone out on a limb, set up a publishing company and really screwed things up for Marvel and possibly DC. I thought that was really funny, y'know? I like the troublemaker aspect of Image. I like the brattiness of it all; I like doing it myself because it's politically incorrect.

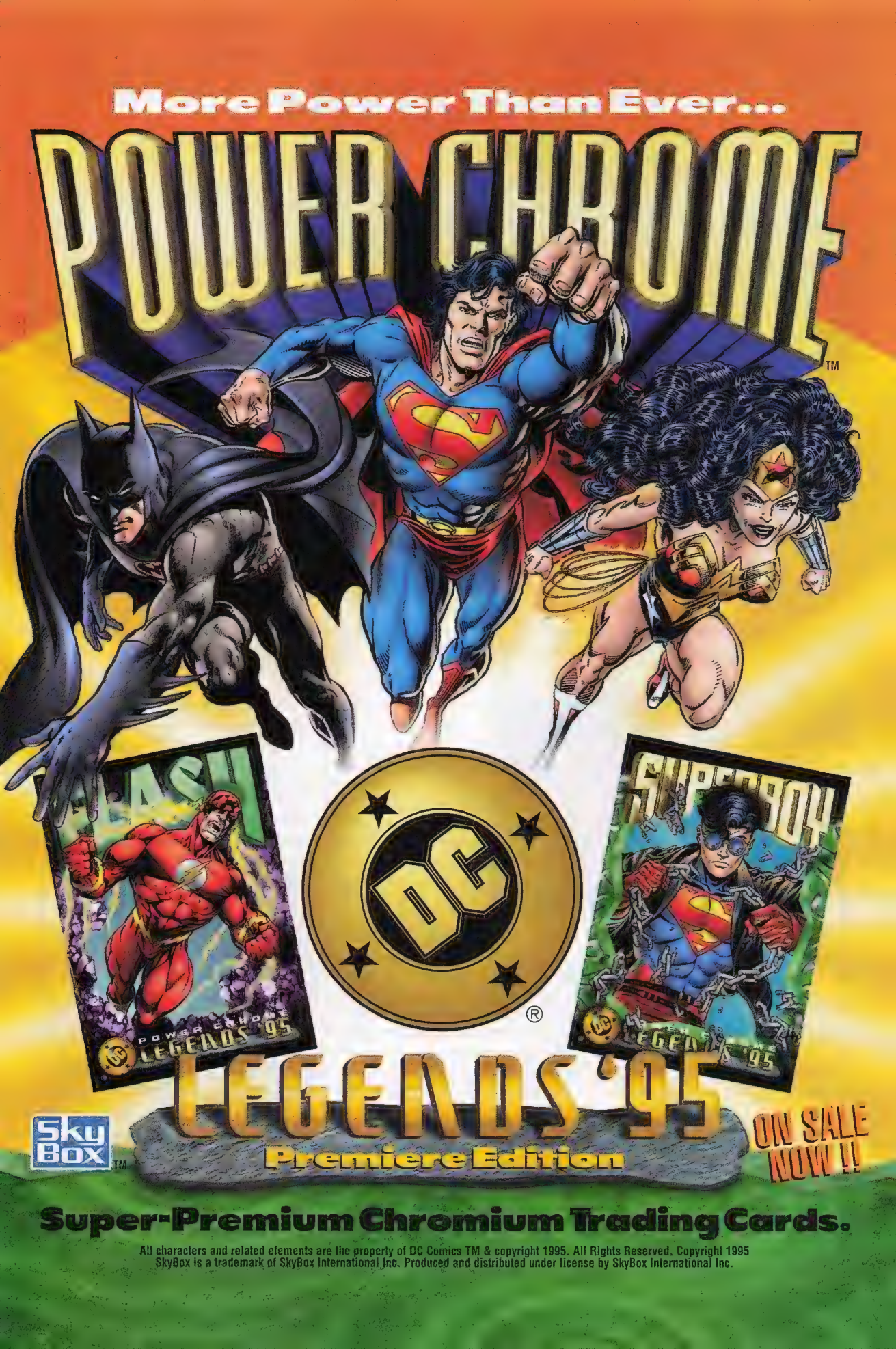
I've had letters from people who got terribly hurt and offended that I could betray them by doing an issue of *Spawn*, and basically...I *like* that. I was getting a bit bored with this image of me as this terribly serious

FROM HELL

In *From Hell*, Moore, along with artist Eddie Campbell, tries to reconstruct the late 19th century murders of Whitechapel, England, committed by Jack the Ripper. Since Jack the Ripper was never caught, Moore took author Stephen Knight's theory from his book *Jack the Ripper: The Final Solution* (Grafton Books, 1977) that Sir William Gull, a Royal Physician, committed the murders, and writes a dense melodrama behind the motivations involved.

Published by Kitchen Sink Press, the quarterly *From Hell* series is currently approaching its eighth issue as it nears its completion.

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BATMAN: THE KILLING JOKE

Released in 1988 by DC, *The Killing Joke* is considered by many to be the definitive "Batman vs. The Joker" story. Giving insight into the maniacal Joker's origin and character motivation, Moore's story (drawn by Brian Bolland) also had a pivotal Bat-moment: the crippling of Barbara Gordon, a.k.a. Batgirl, by The Joker.

comic book icon. It's been real *fun* doing these Image comics, just doing stories that are meant as entertainment. And I think I've managed to offend a lot of people who have an image of me as some sort of pristine champion of the difficult, the obscure and the alternative. I've got an awful lot of faith in alternative comics, but that's not *all* I do. I like to have fun too.

Would you ever consider working for DC or Marvel again?

No. Not unless they gave me back all the work which I consider is morally mine, and then we'd start from there with completely different rules. But that's never going to happen.

Now you're doing *WildC.A.T.s* for Image.

Yeah, I'm having fun with *that*. I was quite excited by it. It's an ongoing series, which means that I can run with it for a while, and with that I think I've started to find the flavor I was looking for in my Image work. Because the Image work's not been easy. This is an audience of kids that's younger than I'm used to. And the language of these comics is different than the language I'm used to—the fact that these artists prefer to have two or three panels a page, rather than six or nine. That changes the way I tell a story, and changes the *nature* of the story. You have to have a fairly high adrenaline level, a fairly constant flow of action—all that puts certain restraints on it. However, I think restraints are actually quite liberating—in a peculiar way they force you into creating something new, to work around them. And that's what I've been trying to do, feeling my way in and seeing what I can get away with.

Do you find that when you're doing something as dark as *From Hell*, the lightness of *WildC.A.T.s* helps?

Absolutely. Especially *WildC.A.T.s*, and the first of the *Warchild* stories I've written for Rob Liefeld, which I think is the best stuff I've written for Image yet. It's an adventure story, but I'm very pleased with the dialogue and the plot. No big message—just a good story.

You're famed for doing incredibly detailed scripts—pages and pages to describe just one panel. Why make them so detailed?

To start off with, it was to make it artist-proof. On a purely practical level, when I was working for *2000 A.D.* I did not know who the artist was going to be on any given story. I didn't know if it would be someone who was just beginning or a seasoned professional. Also, I genuinely like detail and embellishment. Ideas will occur to me while writing a story, so I might as well throw them in, so the artist can use them if they want to.

But with the Image stuff, you've actually been doing simpler scripts, and giving them layouts as well.

I started off doing them. I did them for the *WildC.A.T.s/Spawn* crossover that's about to come out, for *Badrock/Violator*, for *Spawn: Blood Feud* and all the previous Spawn stuff. With the *WildC.A.T.s* stuff, I got fed up. I remembered why I didn't like drawing much in the first place. I couldn't express with my drawings what I could express with my words. So now I'm back to doing incredibly long detailed scripts again.

Is there any more upcoming stuff that people might not have heard about yet?

I've got a 10-page story in a *ShadowHawks of Legend* anthology about various historical ShadowHawks—I've done an ancient Egyptian one, with a cameo by [20th century occultist] Aleister Crowley which was fun. And I'm doing an issue of *The Maxx* with Sam Kieth [#21], because I really do quite like *The Maxx*. Sam touches upon a quirky area of our remembered childhood. There are other various things that have been talked about, but none of them are final yet. I'll be doing *WildC.A.T.s* probably until about issue #32 or #33.

It's been a weird year for the industry. What do you think the future has in store?

I don't know what the future of comics is, but I get the feeling that there *is* a future. Things are all up in the air right now, and it is chaotic, but there definitely *is* a sense of something exciting in the air. W

Peter Hogan is a freelance writer based in England. He drinks tea. You should too.

MOORE AND DC: WHAT HAPPENED?

In the wake of the mega-popular *Watchmen* maxi-series for DC, Moore has said that he became increasingly dissatisfied with work that was not creator-owned, as *Swamp Thing* and *Watchmen* were owned by DC.

He has said he felt DC would not bite at the non-superhero projects he was interested in doing, so he entered the self-publishing arena, and aligned himself with publishers that encouraged creator-ownership.

DC has openly said it would like to work with Moore again. With the formation of its successful Vertigo imprint, which allows creator-ownership, it remains to be seen whether Moore will ever return there.

THEY'RE BACK!

Brandon Choi, Jim Lee, and Scott Williams

Together again for

GEN 13 #6

WS™

image™

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Artwork © Aegis Entertainment 1995. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

THE SIMPSONS TREEHOUSE OF HORROR TRIVIA CONTEST

Wanna win some neat stuff from Bongo Comics and The Simpsons? Well, you came to the right place. Just answer three simple trivia questions from past and present "Simpsons" Halloween Specials (the answers to all of which can be easily found by watching "The Simpsons Treehouse of Horror Special" on October 29, 1995) and mail 'em in. If you get 'em all right, you could win these great things:

Grand Prize (1): One lucky winner who gets all three questions right will receive their very own, brand-new, super-exciting animation cel from the "Treehouse of Horror" Halloween special itself! But wait—there's more! You'll even get the 48-page *Bart Simpson's Treehouse of Horror* comic special (with stories written by Mike Allred, James Robinson and Jeff Smith), signed by none other than Simpsons creator Matt Groening!

First Prize (10): Ten lucky winners will each get a frighteningly funny *Treehouse of Horror* comic special signed by that Groening guy.

WHO WILL BE THE NEXT PHOENIX ?

THIS NOVEMBER!

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IN FEBRUARY: FROM THE ASHES...FOXFIRE!

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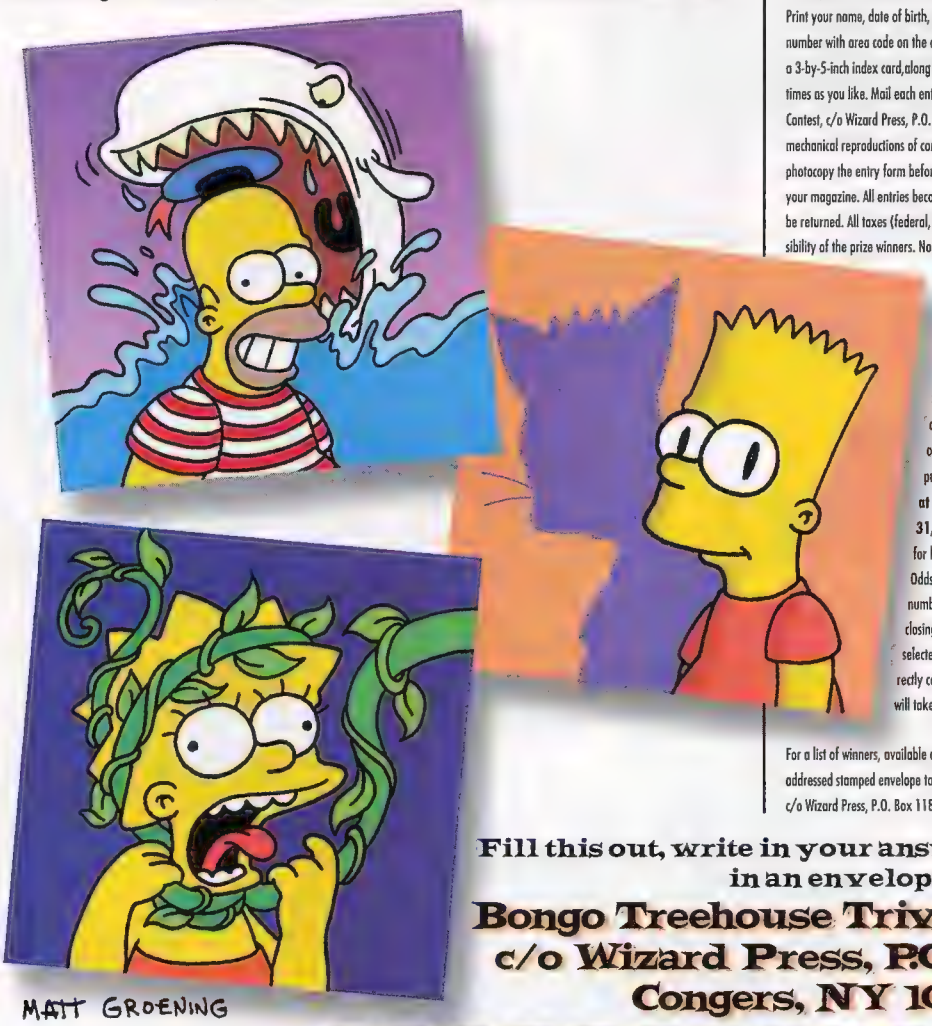
HERE GOES:

1. What does Homer sell his soul for in "The Devil & Homer Simpson"?
2. What does Bart change Homer into in "Twilight Zone Bart"?
3. According to Homer, what movie does the Third Dimension look like?



Oh no! The Legal Text Monster!

No purchase necessary. Contest is open to anyone except employees of Wizard Press, Bongo Comics, Twentieth Century Fox and their immediate families or anyone who would steal someone's trick-or-treat bag. I saw that happen to Trent Staves once. What an ugly sight. He cried like a girl. Print your name, date of birth, address, city, state, zip and telephone number with area code on the official entry form, a standard postcard or a 3-by-5-inch index card, along with your trivia answers. Enter as many times as you like. Mail each entry separately to: Bongo Treehouse Trivia Contest, c/o Wizard Press, P.O. Box 118, Congers, NY 10920-0118. No mechanical reproductions of completed forms are accepted, but you can photocopy the entry form before filling it out if you don't want to mess up your magazine. All entries become property of Wizard Press and none will be returned. All taxes (federal, state and local, if any) will be the responsibility of the prize winners. No cash equivalent or substitute prizes will be offered. Prizes are awarded in the names of the contest winners and are not transferable. Offer void where prohibited, regulated or restricted by law in a manner inconsistent with the purposes and rules hereof. Circus Peanuts? Who put Circus Peanuts in my bag?? I'm gonna find out, go back there and kick over their pumpkin! **All entries must be received at contest headquarters by December 31, 1995.** Wizard Press is not responsible for lost, late, misdirected or mutilated entries. Odds of winning will be determined by the number of valid entries received prior to the closing date of the contest. Prize winners will be selected by random drawing from all the correctly completed entries by Wizard Press. Drawing will take place on January 15, 1996.

For a list of winners, available after January 15, 1996, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to: Bongo Treehouse Trivia Contest Winners, c/o Wizard Press, P.O. Box 118, Congers, NY 10920-0118.

Fill this out, write in your answers, toss it all in an envelope and send it to:

Bongo Treehouse Trivia Contest, c/o Wizard Press, P.O. Box 118, Congers, NY 10920-0118.

Bongo Comics sponsored this contest. And here you thought they couldn't be scary.

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Official Treehouse of Horror Entry Form

DEADLINE IS DECEMBER 31, 1995!

Name _____ Date of Birth _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone Number (with area code) _____

Answer 1 _____

Answer 2 _____

Answer 3 _____

scene

A guide to Japanese comics and animation.

by Lea Hernandez

getting dirty with adam warren

Above: The cover to *The Dirty Pair* #3.
Left: Adam Warren's self-portrait

Talking with Adam Warren is like living any given issue of his best-known work, the "American manga" *Dirty Pair*. Plenty of black humor laced with sarcasm and wit.

Although Warren has been a comics professional for seven years, he has focused most of his attention on a very specific comic: *Dirty Pair*, with a brief side trip into a prequel of the popular made-for-video series *BubbleGum Crisis*. Even as he writes and draws the fifth *Dirty Pair* series, *Fatal but not Serious*, his most-seen work is the cover to Dark Horse Comics' *Barb Wire* #1, which is used as an illustration nearly every time the upcoming Barb Wire movie is mentioned in print.

Born in 1967, Warren was a serious overachiever in Contoocook Valley High School in Peterborough, New Hampshire, snagging a National Merit Scholarship, a spot in *Who's Who Among American High School Students*, and was salutatorian of his graduating class. The difference between salutatorian and valedictorian hinged on a mere point, a B grade in art class. "Should have told me something," muses Warren.

Why a B in art, a subject Warren has an obvious talent for? "I spent my time building and throwing toobees [flying paper tubes]," he reveals. Warren and his classmates honed their toobee engineering skills until they'd constructed one the size of a garbage can that required an entire team to lift and fling.

"I was not a particularly driven individual in high school," Warren admits, attributing scholastic success to an ability to memorize and regurgitate material, as well as a knack for analysis.

Deciding that a college art program wasn't likely to give him the comics training he wanted, Warren decided on the three-year cartoon/graphics course at the Joe Kubert School of Cartoon and Graphic Art in New Jersey. It was a brave decision, considering that his National Merit Scholarship wouldn't pay for it; the scholarship paid for a college education but not a trade or technical one.

In spite of his leap away from traditional academics into a trade school, Warren soon realized he wasn't happy. His hope that immersion in the creative process of comics would keep reality at bay was dashed after just six months at the Kubert School.

Warren had what he describes as an epiphany while drawing a picture of The Phantom riding an elephant; he simply said, "I hate this!" Ready to quit school at the end of his first year, he headed home for Christmas in 1985, with a handful of anime tapes (including TV episodes of "Dirty Pair") given to him by a classmate—and had another epiphany: there could be more to comics.

Abandoning what he calls his previous direction of comics "full of teen-angst, power fantasies" and "furious self-loathing," he began putting his energy into drawing *Dirty Pair* comics for himself and pursuing the dream of getting the rights to do a *Dirty Pair* comic in the U.S. After several leads that didn't pan out, he asked Kubert School classmate (and eventual X-Men colorist) Joe Rosas to introduce him to comics writer and anime fan James Hudnall. Hudnall in turn introduced Warren to Studio Proteus head Toren Smith, who proved to be the missing link in Warren's quest to professionally produce a *Dirty Pair* comic. Warren and Smith proposed a comic to "Dirty Pair" TV rights holders Sunrise and *Dirty Pair* creator Haruka Takachio. Sunrise fell out of the picture, but Takachio's Studio Nue gave the go-ahead to a *Dirty Pair* comic based on Takachio's *Dirty Pair* novels, rather than on the television version.

Warren made good use of his favorite reading material, cyberpunk, in both the *Dirty Pair* series and in last year's *BubbleGum Crisis* mini-series. This brings up an obvious question: wouldn't his stories work just as well with any two heroines (or heroes)? Warren doesn't believe so, affectionately citing the inherent goofiness of the *Dirty Pair* premise—two scantily-clad (by choice) teenagers traipsing from planet to planet wreaking apocalyptic havoc in the name of law and order. It was this opportunity to do humor that attracted him to the idea of doing a *Dirty Pair* comic in the first place.

Warren readily admits that his storylines have grown steadily more grim—provoking guffaws even as they make the reader cringe.

Warren is also quick to answer criticism that his work is sexist: "I could have ruled comics with an iron hand by drawing functionally, nearly naked men prancing around in mystery materials," joked Warren. Still joking, he adds that it's "surreal" that *Dirty Pair* doesn't sell better, since underdressed women seem to be the current rage in comics.

Warren is discreet about future plans for more mainstream projects, only saying that

Boy, doesn't she get cold in that get-up? Kei makes up half of the "Lovely Angels" a.k.a. "The Dirty Pair."

manga & anime NEWS

YEARLY RANMA FUN

Get ready for some early Christmas goodies including a Ranma 1/2 calendar and "boxy!" The Ranma calendar consists of seven, color, poster-sized images of Rumiko Takahashi's hero/heroine Ranma, and sells for $22.50. Yes, this is pricey, but it's also an import, and a heck of a lot cheaper than flying to Japan and getting it yourself! It ships November 28.

The Ranma "boxy" is an organizer made especially for Viz, and will sell for $17.95. Known as a "boxy" because it's a notebook that folds into a box shape, the organizer includes a notepad, diary, stickers and a pen. The whole thing, which ships November 21, is illustrated by Ranma creator Rumiko Takahashi.

To order either of these cool Ranma gifts, call Viz Shop By Mail at (415) 546-7073, or go to your favorite comics store. Order soon, since both are available in limited quantities.

THE LODOSS WAR HITS THE PHONE LINES

In honor of the upcoming release of the *Record of Lodoss War* Gift Box, Central Park Media will be putting out a limited-edition *Record of Lodoss War* phonecard, in conjunction with B&J Telecard, Inc.

The phonecard features the image of Deelit—the beautiful but deadly elf warrior—one of the key characters from the *Record of Lodoss War* saga.

The artwork was created exclusively for the phonecard by Yutaka Izubuchi, original designer of *Record of Lodoss War*.

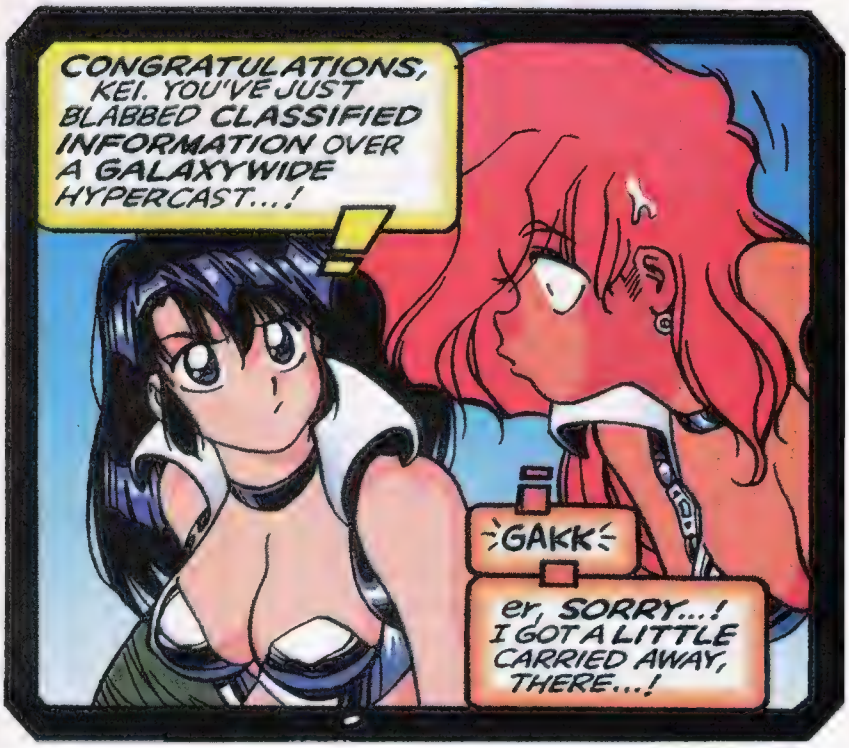
The phonecard will not be offered for sale individually and will only be available in the first 1000 *Record of Lodoss War* Gift Boxes. Gift Boxes feature all six subtitled volumes of the series in a collector's box and will be available in stores Nov. 7 with a suggested retail price of $129.95.

NEXT PAGE

the larger comics companies now seem to be more receptive to the manga style, citing the work of Marvel's *Uncanny X-Men* artist Joe Madureira and the artist of DC's *Impulse*, Humberto Ramos. Warren does note that mainstream artists influenced by manga and anime are still not past the most obvious aspects of the style, namely big eyes and speed lines, but is uncharacteristically optimistic that they might eventually pick up on the subtleties of the storytelling and pacing.

Finally, does he have any spiritual advice for aspiring artists and writers? His answer is pure Warren and typically self-mocking: "Get out while you still can!" **W**

Lea Hernandez letters and retouches manga, co-moderates the anime and manga forum for the online service GEnie, and writes and draws comics.



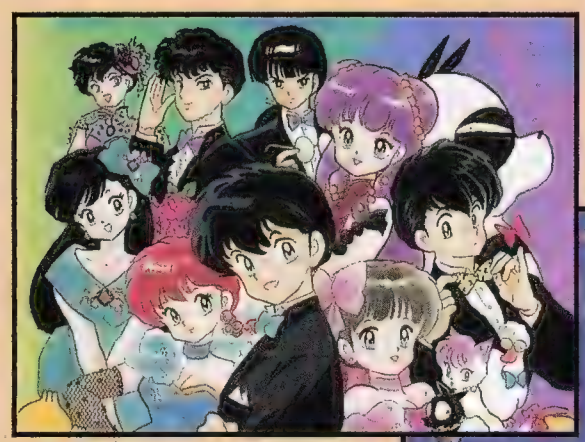
picks of the month

video:

Ranma 1/2: Desperately Seeking Shampoo

(Viz Video, 60 minutes, two episodes, laser disc, in English and closed caption subtitles, $39.95)

The basic premise of *Ranma 1/2* is simple: a young man, Ranma, falls into an accursed spring, resulting in him becoming a woman when doused with cold water, and requiring hot water to change him back to a man. Creator Takahashi added many cursed characters to the Ranma cast, including the winsome Shampoo, whose curse is to become a cat.



There are two episodes on Viz Video's long-awaited first laser disc release: "Curse of the Contrary Jewel" and "Tendo Family Christmas Scramble." In the first episode, Shampoo, who is psychotically devoted to Ranma, gets a jewel that turns her against her beloved. In the second episode, it's Christmas, which means the entire massive cast of *Ranma 1/2* shows up to celebrate. Buy it now and put yourself in a grateful holiday mood; after all, nobody's family is this obnoxious.

manga:

Adolf *(shown on the left)*

(Cadence Books—a division of Viz communications—b&w, 256 pages, hardcover $21.95, Street date: November 14)

Study at the feet of the master, Japan's "God of Comics," the late Dr. Osamu Tezuka.

Some will remember last year's controversy over the connections between Tezuka's *Jungle Emperor* and Disney's *The Lion King*. Now's your chance to experience the first full-length English language publication of a Tezuka work.

Adolf is the story of three men named Adolf—and, yes, one of them is Adolf Hitler—who find their lives intertwined on the eve of World War II. Obviously, this isn't for kids, and not likely to be light reading, either. However, it is Tezuka, and therefore eminently readable. ●

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a look at some cool stuff with an alternative twist

Space and Beyond

Just about every person working in comics today can look back fondly on a childhood spent lost in the imaginative and fanciful world of comic books. It's a pretty safe bet that artist Michael Cohen, one half of the team behind *Strange Attractors*, has a little bit more to look back on than your typical creator.

"In the early 1960s, my friend Tom [and I] traveled all over Los Angeles looking for used comics," Cohen remembers. "Eventually we stumbled on a store called Cherokee Books, which was one of the few places in the country that had an extensive Golden Age collection. We ended up working for them, and at one point we were hired to write a price guide for the store [titled *The Argosy Comic Book Price Guide*]. It turns out that it is one of the very first price guides. It was just me and my friend, and we wrote down as best as we could what we thought those books were worth."

Cohen's story bears a slight resemblance to the story of Sophie, the main character of the self-published science fiction comic *Strange Attractors* created by Cohen and scripter Mark Sherman. At the beginning of the series, Sophie finds herself faced with the task of cataloging the contents of the Museum of Lost Things. Sophie's job grows more complicated as she quickly becomes entangled in the lives of Pirate Peg and the other characters she used to read about in her favorite comic book, *Spicy Space Stories*. It turns out these characters are real people, and the creator of the comic has been relating true events which happened to them. Sophie gradually discovers the truth about these stories, which have been altered by the creator to improve the image of its stars.

"We're trying to tell the story of a character who is not inclined to be a hero," Cohen explains. "What we're doing is, over the course of time, making someone who is a withdrawn individual become a hero. It's sort of our take on what a hero *really* is."

While there is a heroic story on the surface of *Strange Attractors*, there is a lot more going on underneath. In fact, there are enough things going on in the comic to make *Strange Attractors* very difficult to pin down at first. It pays homage to Golden Age comics without slavishly imitating them. It's science fiction, yet it isn't weighed down with excessive technobabble. It's a romance comic without the usual trappings of the genre. While other creative teams might get lost with all of these disparate elements, Cohen and Sherman expertly mix them all together into a thoroughly exhilarating reading experience.

Cohen and Sherman's strength also lies in their ability to instantly draw the reader into Sophie's adventures. Their seemingly simple tale happens to be an intricately plotted adventure in a well-thought-out fantasy world. It's obvious that Cohen and Sherman spent a lot of time thinking through all of the nuances in *Strange Attractors*.

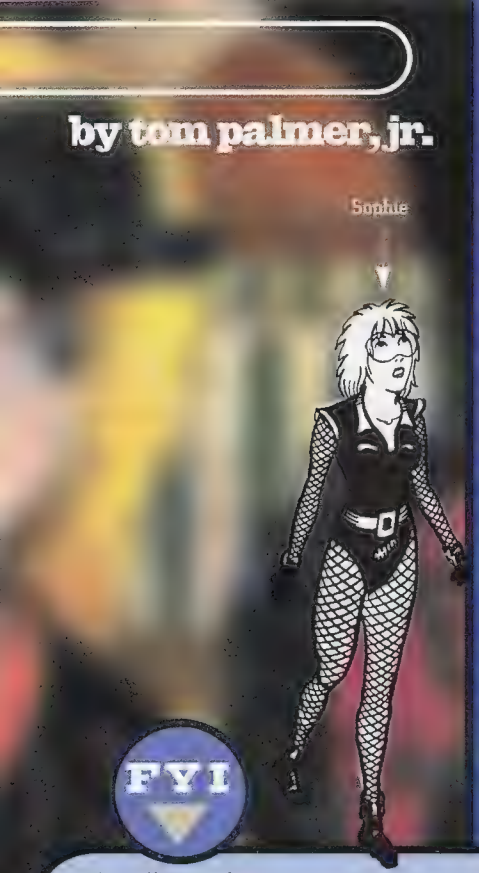
In addition to the series, the pair have worked on numerous projects together, from a computer game called *ThiefQuest* to several different bands, but *Strange Attractors* is the one that they feel the most confident about. "I think the comic worked out because we've had years of working together on different projects, and we finally have one that is actually happening, rather than never getting off the drawing board," explains Sherman.

Cohen and Sherman have a unique working relationship. They both collabo-

While there is a heroic story on the surface of Strange Attractors, there is a lot more going on underneath

art from *Strange Attractors* #6

by tom palmer, jr.



rate on the plotting of each story, but Cohen handles all of the art, while Sherman writes the final script for the comic. The whole process is complicated by the fact that the two are separated by 2,500 miles. Sherman resides in the state of Washington, while Cohen recently moved to New Hampshire. "We're sort of developing a form of ESP," Cohen explains. "I'll have an idea for something and I'll call Mark up, and it turns out he's thought of the same thing."

The distance between the two hasn't put any major strains on their collaboration. "Usually we're at odds, since we have very different philosophies on life, but for some reason we both want the comic to go in the same direction," Cohen states. Sherman also has faith in their work on the title. "It's sort of like a good marriage where one person has a certain strength that the other lacks, and the whole relationship turns out to be really complementary."

With all of the changes taking place in the comic marketplace, Cohen and Sherman are trying their best to make sure not only *Strange Attractors*, but also other small press books, survive. To do their own part they often swap ads with other self-publishers, and invite other artists to draw pin-ups of the *Strange Attractors* cast.

They also see possibilities for the small press in the recent boom in technology, especially with the immense exchange of information over the Internet. "There are more and more World Wide Web sites out there for independent comics," Sherman notes. "Comics with very small circulations are getting picked up on the Internet."

Cohen and Sherman are grateful for the opportunity they had to start *Strange Attractors*, and feel that others should have the same chance. "I hope that comics can retain the sort of openness where people on an international basis can get in and produce a piece of effective media, like comics, on a shoestring budget," Sherman explains. "That kind of access is pretty mind-blowing. It doesn't exist in any other medium." W

Tom Palmer Jr. never drinks his milk. Maybe that's why everybody always picks on him.

The twelfth issue of *Strange Attractors* is out now, and all previous issues are in print and available. If your comic shop won't order them for you, you can write directly to Retrografix, 67 Emerald St., Suite 623, Keene, NH 03431. Individual issues are $2.50, plus $1 for postage. New issues appear on a bimonthly basis, and a trade paperback is in the works.

Michael and Mark's Recommended Reading

The guys at Retrografix support some of the best in the small press. If you're looking for something different, give these books a try: *Wandering Star* (Pen & Ink Comics), *Poison Elves* (Sirius), *Cyberzone* (Jet Black Graphics), *Gideon Hawk* (Big Shot Comics), *Bacchus* (Eddie Campbell Comics), *Thieves and Kings* (I Box Publishing), *Cavewoman* (Basement Comics), *Known Associates Mystery Series* (Known Associates Press).

Recommended Reading

I've been making the rounds to different comic stores lately, and I've noticed that it is almost impossible to find any small press books on the stands. If you are looking for any of the comics I have written about recently, then you MUST ask your store owner to order them for you. Don't be afraid to speak up. Your retailer's job is to serve you by getting the comics you want. If he tells you he can't order a book for you, he is lying. Things are changing every day in the comic industry, and it is becoming more and more important for fans to speak up and be vocal about the comics they want to read.

Before I reach the bottom of the page and run out of room, here is my humble selection of books that you should look (or ask) for this month:

Eightball Dan Clowes has been on a roll lately. Every new issue of *Eightball* is better than the last, and his story "Caricature" from issue #15 is simply a masterpiece. Hopefully Clowes can keep his winning streak going with the latest issue, *Eightball* #16, which should be out in November from Fantagraphics. Look for a new installment of "Ghost World," as well as several other stories in color and black-and-white. Write to Fantagraphics at 7563 Lake City Way NE, Seattle, WA 98115 for more information and a free catalog.

32 Stories Everyone's talking about Adrian Tomine's *Optic Nerve*, and this graphic novel will give you some idea why. This collection reprints all of Tomine's mini-comic versions of *Optic Nerve*, and it offers an interesting look into the development of a young artist. You can see Tomine experimenting with different techniques and styles as the stories progress. For more information and a catalog, write to Drawn & Quarterly Publications at 5550 Jeanne Mance Street #16, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H2V 4K6.

TUG and buster Hopefully you've heard something about this comic before. In case you haven't, it tells the tale of TUG, a silent tough guy and his sycophantic sidekick, buster. Marc Hempel is a truly insightful humorist, and with *TUG and buster* he turns his eye to the myth of the ideal male for some serious laughs. You can find this fun series, released by Art and Soul Comics starting in November, in your local comic store.

TRAILER PARK

***Wizard*'s column about Hollywood and TV and stuff like that**

PRESSMAN cranks out comic films

By Jenny Peters

Just call Edward R. Pressman "Mr. Comic Book Movie Producer." Although this heir to the Pressman Toy Company fortune started making movies over 25 years ago, he seems to only recently have found his true calling: bringing comic books and graphic novels to life.

"It wasn't really a conscious decision, a strategic decision," insisted Pressman, "but when you look at it after the fact, the films we've made have either been kind of fantasy-based, comic-book movies like *Conan the Barbarian* or *The Crow* on the one hand, or reality-based movies, such as *Wall Street* or *Reversal of Fortune* or *Homicide* or *Bad Lieutenant* or *Badlands*. I think that in terms of emphasis, there's more emphasis now than ever before on comic-book-related material."

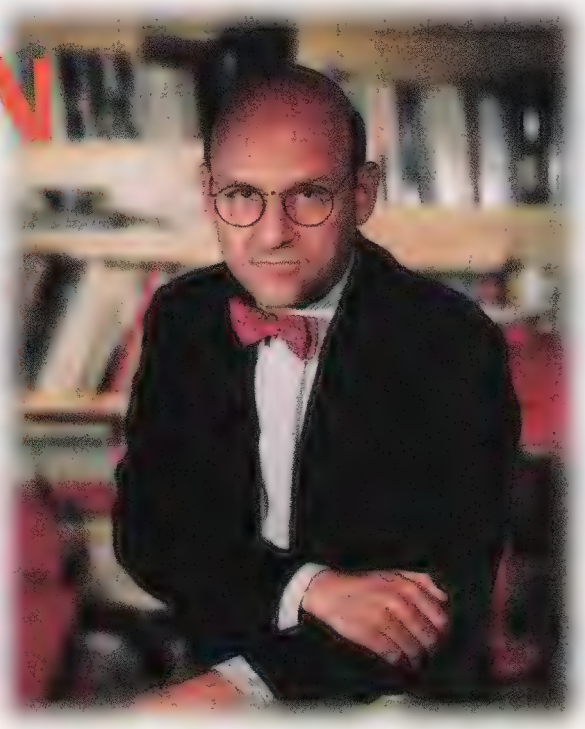
As the producer of the $100 million-grossing *The Crow*, a film which was barely completed after the accidental death of star Brandon Lee, Pressman learned firsthand just how powerful (and profitable) a graphic novel with a strong fan following can be as a movie. "After *The Crow*, we see the incredible potential as a matter of growth of the company, from a financial point of view, that the synergies of music and comic books and movies and new gaming areas are all related," said Pressman.

Despite the fact that the Sylvester Stallone vehicle *Judge Dredd*, Pressman's latest entry in the comic-to-film market, had a disappointing $34 million in ticket sales, the producer is forging ahe with numerous mov projects. He's als launched Top Doll Comics, a compar designed to publi comics and graphic no els in conjunction wi the various films th Pressman is developir

"We're not getti offices and staffing to begin shipping o a bunch of boxes full of comics," explained Top Dollar's Vice President Jeff Conner, a former journalist and editor of Scream/Press. "We'll be working with real publishers who are already in that business, and they'll be handling the heavy lifting involved. On some properties, we would do almost all of the editorial work, developing something that we have as a film script, creating the comic art and story, and we'd just look for a print and distribution deal."

Already in the works, Conner said, are "three new graphic novels with Kitchen Sink chronicling the further chapters in *The Crow* saga."

Those publishing plans coincide with the first of the Edward R. Pressman Film Corporation's lineup of new films, a slate of movies that stretches right into the 21st century, as Pressman details:



EDWARD R. PRESSMAN HAS BIG PLANS FOR COMIC BOOK MOVIES.

• *The Crow: City of Angels*

"The film is set in a mythic Los Angeles, in the same way the first film was set in kind of a mythic Detroit. It will be directed by Tim Pope and will star Vincent Perez, playing a character named Ash Crawford, not Eric Draven. It's a different protagonist. The tragedy of Brandon's death made it clear what we had to do. There was no point or rationale to try to duplicate Brandon. He was unique and should always, hopefully, be remembered for that. He really established the character for the world and I think we wanted to find an actor who had similar strengths, in terms of his strength and beauty and athleticism, but [would] somehow be totally different and not trying to imitate Brandon, someone totally unique and strong of his own nature. There will be a very ambitious record album connected to it again. The

music, from the original comic book of [James] O'Barr, was an integral factor in the conception of the comic. So we're working closely with O'Barr, trying to keep the spirit of the comic alive. It will release next August."

• *Elfquest*

"This is an animated film, and as animated films go, it's a longer-term project. We got involved with it a couple of years ago and we've spent the last two years with Wendy and Richard Pini, the creators, working first on the outline, then very extensive storyboards. We've just finished getting the storyboards done and now we're just starting to explore the financing possibilities and exploring different ways to go, not just in the United States but around the world.

"Part of the ongoing discussion right now is over what type of animation we'll use. I think ideally the director would love to push the technology to its extreme and to create a world that we haven't seen before, using the most advanced technology, but that's very expensive. So we're exploring more classical approaches—as well as combinations of the two [approaches]—and I think the marketplace will to some extent define the level of technology we can use, given that *Elfquest* is not a brand-name classic story like *Beauty and the Beast* or *Aladdin*. This is something a little edgier and also not as well-known at this point, but it's a great myth.

"It's tough to set a date for the film. I think that the financing could take six months to a year and then the actual production could take close to two years. So it's a ways off."

• *Luke Cage*

"The script is being written by John Singleton with a guy named Joe Doughrity and we've been working closely with [Marvel Comics publisher] Stan Lee from the beginning. John is a great comic book fan—when we met him, he could recite, chapter and verse, every Luke Cage issue, so he and Stan hit it off from the beginning. I think Stan is kind of an icon for John, so it's been a great partnership. Larry Fishburne (*What's Love Got to Do with It?*, *Just Cause*) will star; he and John have talked about it. Informally, everyone's agreed, but we have no deal yet. The story takes into account the original basis of the origin of Luke Cage, but then John has come up with ideas that go far beyond that, that are new to the comic book. The comic that comes out by Marvel when the film comes out will be the story in the film. The start date is up to John. If the script is right, we'll go right away, but he's got to feel comfortable. I would love to get into this right away and start shooting and get it out by the middle of next summer, but we'll just have to see what happens."

Added Doughrity: "Both John and I are big comics fans. And John wants to do an action movie. It's basically the origin of Luke Cage, a man framed for a murder he didn't commit. He volunteers for an experiment that gives him superpowers."

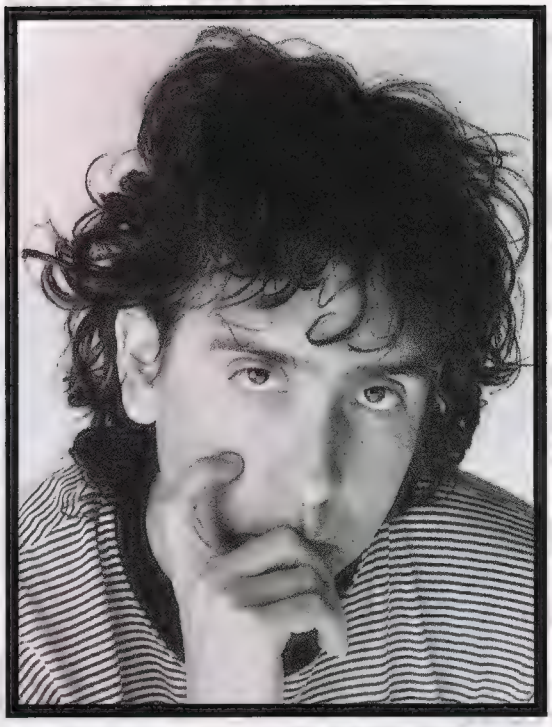
Doughrity said the villain of the movie will be Moses Magnum, from the comics. He also said he is trying to incorporate some of the elements of the recent, short-lived *Cage* comics series.

DOES LUKE CAGE LOOK LIKE LAWRENCE FISHBURNE?

• *The Mutant Chronicles*

"The basis of *Mutant Chronicles* is a futuristic role-playing game that was created in Sweden about 15 years ago. It involves a team of what are called 'Doom Troopers,' the best men or women from each of the geopolitical units that are colonizing the planet. The Earth is uninhabitable, and the nation-states are really corporations which each come to inhabit nine different planets. The planets are at war with each other, over mercenary matters, until a tenth planet comes to be known, which has a force of evil that is so great that it unites the planets. So from the planets, the best people are chosen to lead the expedition to fight the evil. They are not mutants, but the enemy is. We plan to start shooting this January or February, in London. This will be a $40 million dollar movie. We're out right now, offering it to major actors. It should be ready next Christmas, or maybe in the spring of 1997."

(With additional reporting by Rob Allstetter)



ANIMATION'S ON THE MIND OF **BATMAN FOREVER** DIRECTOR TIM BURTON.

TIM BURTON GETS ANIMATED

Animation in Hollywood is moving up—and out. While Disney continues to lead the pack, with plans for two major full-length animated films every year and animation studios in California, Orlando, France and Japan, other major players are making major commitments to the art form.

Director Tim Burton, an ex-Disney animator himself, is forsaking Hollywood for the gentler shores of the San Francisco bay, where he's setting up the Tim Burton Animation Company. Shifting his focus from producing and directing a wide range of live-action films (including this summer's megahit *Batman Forever*), Burton plans to devote his energies to fewer, more personal, projects. First up for the fledgling company is *The Corpse Bride*, a typically Burtonesque story of a guy who accidentally becomes engaged

Tim Burton photo courtesy of Everett Collection

THE FANTASTIC FOUR GET AN X-MEN TREATMENT

to a corpse. The film, which begins production in January, will use stop-motion animation similar to *The Nightmare Before Christmas*, Burton's 1993 visual feast.

Meanwhile, in Phoenix, veteran animator Don Bluth (*Land Before Time*, *Rock-a-Doodle*) is settling in to his new state-of-the-art animation studio, as Twentieth Century Fox launches its new division, Fox Animation Studios. Intended to challenge Disney's stranglehold on the animation market, Fox plans to produce a full-length animated film every 18 months.

Bluth and longtime partner Gary Goldman will tackle the story of *Anastasia* as their first project for Fox. The story of the (supposedly) surviving daughter of Russian Czar Nicholas will follow the traditional formula of combining story and song into an animated musical that Bluth learned at Disney as a youngster, when he worked on *Sleeping Beauty* and other classics. Actress Meg Ryan (*Sleepless in Seattle*) has signed on as the voice of Anastasia; look for the film to be completed in the spring of 1997. ■ *JP*

FF GET BY WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM FRIENDS

Animation fans are getting a double dose of Larry Houston's work this fall. The last of the 60 episodes Houston produced of the Fox Network's "X-Men" will take up at least half of the fourth season, and, working with Tom Tataranowicz, he has produced all 13 episodes of the "Fantastic Four" portion of the revamped "Marvel Action Universe."

"It's really looking quite good," Houston said after getting footage back from overseas. "The animation is being done in the Philippines, and they're really cutting loose."

The second season of "Fantastic Four" adapts several classic Jack Kirby/Stan Lee comics stories and guest-stars Daredevil, The Inhumans, Black Panther, Silver Surfer, Nova (the Frankie Raye version) and The Incredible Hulk. "To me, the best stories were the first 100 issues," Houston said. "Everybody remembers them."

Houston is also notorious for sneaking in cameos of other Marvel characters, creating quite a buzz on "X-Men." On "Fantastic Four," look for the New Warriors, several Avengers (including Vision, Wasp and Hercules), Ghost Rider (voiced by comics buff Richard Grieco) and She-Hulk. He wasn't able to use Spider-Man or the X-Men because of their Fox connections, but look for the Scarlet Spider and some suspiciously familiar civilians.

Guest voices this season include Ron Perlman (*Beauty and the Beast*) as The Hulk and The Wizard, Mark Hamill as Maximus, Kathy Ireland as Crystal and Michael Dorn (Worf on "Star Trek: The Next Generation") as Gorgon.

Like the first season, the second ends with a Doom/Silver Surfer story. Houston is confident the second season of "Fantastic Four" will be much better received than the first, which, despite good ratings, was frequently criticized.

"I'd definitely like to do another season," he said. "It looks good for that. I think we'll get an early pick-up." ■ *Rob Allstetter*

SNIPES TAKES AIM AT BLACK PANTHER

After wearing a dress in *To Wong Foo, Thanks For Everything, Julie Newmar*, Wesley Snipes is ready for his next challenge: becoming a superhero. The actor and his production company are solidly behind the idea of bringing comic book heroes to life. "We're still working on *The Black Panther*," he said, updating the status of bringing the Marvel Comics character to the big screen. "We're still developing it. It's coming, definitely, it's going to happen. [The script] is getting much better. Hopefully, we'll shoot it next year. September, October of next year."

At the same time, Snipes and company have two more comic-related projects in the fire. "We have another comic book hero, called ShadowHawk. We're pitching that as a television show," Snipes explained. "The TV show wouldn't be for me, although I may do something on the show, a recurring type of role. And we have another one called Blade, which is a Marvel Comics hero. That's kind of like a Crow type of hero. Blade is for me. That's a comic book character who is part vampire and part human, and hunts vampires. Vampires living in modern 1995. He's really avenging the death of his mother, who was killed by a vampire. He despises vampires, so he just kills them on sight. Every time he sees one, a fight breaks out and he kills them. Yes, that one will be a real, real family oriented film." Watch for *ShadowHawk* on television by next fall; *Blade* is probably farther away, closer to the year 2000. ■ *JP*

WESLEY SNIPES IS ALL SET FOR THE BLACK PANTHER

Change the World

October- Mage Tarot Deck. The Tarot has been woven into the fabric of **Mage: The Ascension** since the game blazed into existence in 1993. Fans have been able to glimpse samples of these cards in sourcebooks, but only now is the definitive **Mage Tarot Deck** available. Based on World of Darkness iconography, the **Mage Tarot Deck** features the art of Joshua Gabriel Timbrook, John Cobb, Larry MacDougall, and Alex Sheikman.

December — Mage: The Ascension, Second Edition. The long-awaited second edition for the storytelling game of reality on the brink!
Mage: The Ascension challenges players to confront their innermost desires. As a modern-day mage with the power of magick at your fingertips, what would you do? And what would having such absolute power do to you? Breathtaking new art.Crisp organization. Expansive background information.

MAGE
The Ascension

Mage: The Ascension.
Join the battle for reality.

WHITE WOLF
GAME STUDIO

POWER UP!

By Steve Brown

GREEN LANTERN AIN'T DEAD

Green Lantern for the SNES is back from the dead. Once thought to be banished forever, Ocean has retooled the game and it is expected to be released in late November. Originally Ocean had a version of the game starring former GL Hal Jordan in early development, but the events of the past year-and-a-half in the *Green Lantern* comic changed Hal into the loopy-as-a-sock-puppet Parallex, and forced Ocean to reevaluate the video game. So the game will now feature new Green Lantern Kyle Rayner, will have seven levels, mode 7 graphics and, of course, a side-scrolling platform.

The character Lobo is a lot like the fighting game genre, you either hate him or you love him. I hate fighting games but love Lobo and it's tearing me apart. Hopefully when Ocean finally finishes the in-development-too-long-you-know-what-that-means SNES SGI-rendered graphic fighter, I can quell the raging fire of conflict that even now shakes my very soul.

Acclaim has been fairly tight-lipped on any details about the should-be-out-when-you-read-this *Spawn* SNES video game, but judging from the artwork they've provided, it is another sidescrolling special from the Acclaim factory.

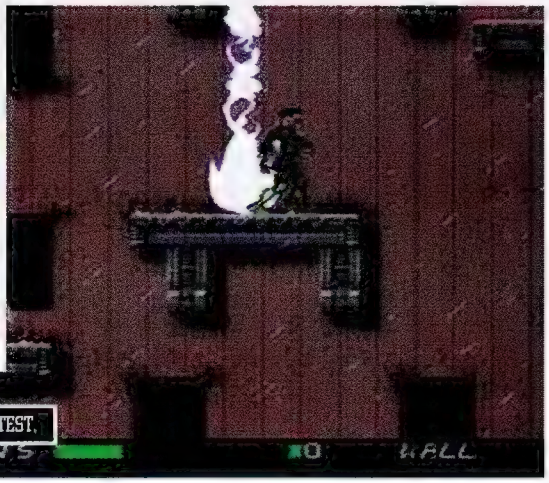
Robotica, Acclaim's first entry into the Sega Saturn field, is a first-person game similar to *Doom*. The twist is that you're a cybernetic invasion vehicle, with a whole bunch of futuristic weapons. I think the appeal of *Doom*-type games is the gore and blood, not the format.

ROBOTICA

LOBO VS. KRINGLE

Hey, what would be the perfect bookend to a dying, bruised and battered 16-bit market? How about the sequel to perhaps the defining game of the video game Silver Age, *Super Mario World*? *SMW2: Yoshi's Island* is already out in Japan on their version of the SNES, the Super Famicom. W

Steve Brown likes to play with Cabbage Patch Kids dolls and eats Oreo Granola Bars at 2 a.m.

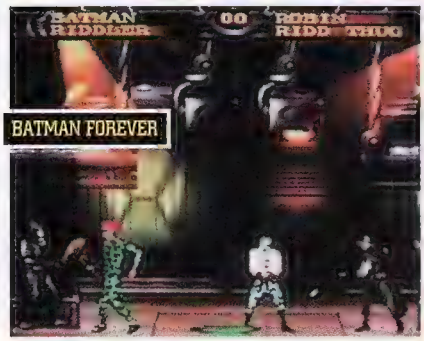


KYLE RAYNER GETS TO PUT HIS POWERS TO THE VIDEO TEST.

Reviews

BATMAN FOREVER

(by Acclaim for either SNES/Sega Genesis)



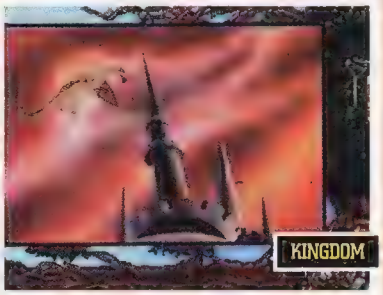
BATMAN FOREVER

Incredible SGI-rendered graphics save both versions, which are surprisingly exactly alike. This game is hard and lacks any originality falling into the typical sidescroller clichés. Acclaim has created the best-looking and deepest Batman game yet, undemanding gamers will get their money's worth. If you are over the age of 12, rent it first.

KINGDOM, THE FAR REACHES

(by Interplay for the 3DO)

Kingdom is a cool game; it is designed just like *Dragons Lair*, fully animating the result of particular joystick pattern. *Kingdom* does *Dragons Lair* one better and integrates that platform into a more complex storyline with multiple endings. I fully enjoyed it and any fan of the original quarter eater will groove on *Kingdom*.


KINGDOM

MECHWARRIOR 3050

(by Activision for the SNES)

For some odd reason, Activision changed the name from *Battletech*, perhaps saving a royalty fee. *Mechwarrior 3050* is identical to its version for the Genesis. I liked it then and if you enjoy *Jungle Strike*-type games and mechanized destruction, you'll be enamored now. A word to the wise...this is an extremely difficult game. But a tip for all you cheaters, type in the following code for unlimited ammo. At the password entry screen, type in M1ROG3.

MECHWARRIOR 3050

VIRTUAL BOY

(by Nintendo for the clamoring masses.)

I fully intended to hate the game system *Virtual Boy*, after seeing an early version of it at E3, but after playing it, it really does deliver a positively unique gaming experience. The flaws are obvious, it's not really portable, the $180 pricetag and it's only color is red. The mono-chromatic set-up is essential to creating the depth perception of 3-D. Amazingly, the machine is 32-bit; these early games are mere minor samples of what this system is capable of. *VBoy* runs on batteries and an AC adaptor is available separately. It sucks batteries dry so the AC hookup is a wise investment. Enjoyable as it is, *VBoy*'s title is a misnomer, "Virtually Virtual Boy" is more like it.

IT'S ALL COVERED IN BLOOD!! MARIO CLASH.

The video game *Red Alarm* is the best of the bunch, kind of a 3-D *Tempest* meets *Defender*, you pilot a spaceship through a claustrophobic, bit-mapped, and hostile terrain. Confusing at times, but very well done. *Mario Tennis* is the pack-in game and also is well done, but why include an obvious better as a two-player game? The *VBoy* link device is still on the drawing board and as you all know, playing with yourself all the time is unhealthy and gets boring. *Galactic Pinball* and *Teleboxer* both breathe a little life into their respective tired genres. So far all the available *VBoy* titles are worthwhile but with 32-bits of power available it's only a matter of time before some truly revolutionary games are produced. *Waterworld* and *Mario Clash* should be available by the time you read this.

"I DON'T SEE WATER ANYWHERE! WHAT A GYP!" WATERLESS WATERWORLD

THE CREATE A VILLAIN CONTEST

Hey, you! Yeah, you—Mr. Hotshot Comic Creator Wannabe. Want a villain of your very own creation to appear in a future issue of Malibu's *Rune*? Sure you do. We all want things, don't we? I want Cindy Crawford sitting on a big ol' pot o' gold waitin' on my doorstep when I get home, and that never happens. And you don't see me complaining now, do you? Sorry. Got carried away there.

Well, you can actually fulfill this particular little wish, and you don't even have to find the end of a rainbow.

Grand Prize (1):

One lucky reader who sends in the best bad guy will have his or her creation appear in an upcoming issue of the horrifying *Rune*. You'll receive credit as the villain's creator and, since you're now a professional, you'll even be paid 100 American dollars.

First Prize (10):

10 winners will each get a Rune cardboard stand-up, five-and-a-half feet worth of vicious vampire guaranteed to intimidate any door-to-door salesman into crappin' in his drawers.

Second Prize (20):

20 readers will each get a copy of the brand-spankin'-new *Rune* #1 (vol. 2), autographed by nifty-neat artist Kyle Hotz.

HOW TO PLAY

We want you to create a villain for Rune. But since Rune is a pretty nasty guy himself (being a vampire who eats heads and stuff), your villain had better be double-damn mean and double-damn tough and truly nasty and ugly, too. Draw your favorite villain, or if you can't draw a straight line without a ruler, you can describe your villain. Show us what your villain would look like. Tell us what his or her powers would be. Don't know where to start? Check out this month's "Krash Course" on page 44. Then go gonzo-evil on us. Your villain, should he be deemed the nastiest of the bunch, will be used in an upcoming *Rune* comic! Pretty keen, huh?

The Evil Legalese

No purchase necessary. Contest is open to anyone except employees of Wizard Press, Malibu Comics and their immediate families or any goody-goody-two-shoeses out there. Print your name, date of birth, address, city, state, zip and telephone number with area code on the official entry form or a 3-by-5-inch index card and attach the form or card to your entry. Enter as many times as you like. Mail each entry separately to: Malibu Create a Villain Contest, c/o Wizard Press, P.O. Box 118, Congers, NY 10920-0118. No mechanical reproductions of completed forms are accepted, but you can photocopy the entry form before filling it out if you don't want to mess up your magazine. All entries become property of Wizard Press and none will be returned. All taxes (federal, state and local, if any) will be the responsibility of the prize winners. No cash equivalent or substitute prizes will be offered. Prizes are awarded in the names of the contest winners and are not transferable. Offer void where prohibited, regulated or restricted by law in a manner inconsistent with the purposes and rules hereof. Follow these rules to the letter or we'll whack you upside your head with a kielbasa. **All entries must be received at contest headquarters by December 29, 1995.** Wizard Press is not responsible for lost, late, misdirected or mutilated entries, yadda, yadda, yadda. Odds of winning will be determined by the number of valid entries received prior to the closing date of the contest. Prize winners will be selected based on quality, originality and creativity from all properly completed entries by Wizard Press. Drawing will take place on January 15, 1996.

For a list of winners, available after January 15, 1996, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to: Malibu Create a Villain Winners, c/o Wizard Press, P.O. Box 118, Congers, NY 10920-0118.

Fill this out, attach it to your entry, toss it all in an envelope and send it to:

Malibu Create a Villain Contest, c/o Wizard Press, P.O. Box 118, Congers, NY 10920-0118.

Official Create a Villain Entry Form

DEADLINE IS DECEMBER 29, 1995!

Name _____ Age _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone Number (with area code) _____

Did you attach your drawing or description of your villain?

BIGGER THAN LIFE!

They keep telling you size doesn't matter? Well, they lied! Size *does* matter, especially when playing the *OverPower* card game. You can literally size up your opponent better when using these double-sized, 5-by-7-inch Fleer *OverPower* placards. All 39 first-run characters are available, conveniently broken down into groups of 13 super-dudes each. Any one group can be yours for just $4.00 plus four wrappers from Fleer *OverPower* booster packs, or you can get the entire set for only $10.00 plus 10 wrappers.

OverPower is easier to play when you're using the Placards, as your regularly sized special cards won't cover up your larger character cards. And hot dammit, they just look so much cooler! The best part? These babies are Wizard Press exclusives—not available anywhere else. And they're tournament-legal. Just ask Fleer—they'll tell ya.

So what are you waiting for? There's the coupon and the envelope. Hop to it and you can become the biggest hero on the block.

GROUP #1
Apocalypse
Carnage
Colossus
Deadpool
Hulk
Jubilee
Mr. Fantastic
Mystique
Professor X
Rogue
Spider-Man
Storm
War Machine

GROUP #2
Beast
Cable
Cyclops
Dr. Doom
Dr. Octopus
Gambit
Hobgoblin
Invisible Woman
Iron Man
Psylocke
Sabretooth
Spider-Woman
Thing

GROUP #3
Bishop
Captain America
Elektra
Human Torch
Jean Grey
Magneto
Omega Red
Punisher
Rhino
Silver Surfer
Thor
Venom
Wolverine

The Don't-Miss-It Fine Print:

No reproductions of this coupon will be accepted. This coupon must be sent in the accompanying envelope, using one coupon per maximum order of one full set. You may put additional coupons in the same envelope. Remit by check or money order only, along with the necessary *OverPower* wrappers. Residents of the state of New York must include 7.25% sales tax. **In addition to the wrappers, Canadian orders remit $5.00 per group of 13; other foreign orders remit $6.00 per group of 13. Canadian orders remit $13.00 per set of 39; other foreign orders remit $20.00 per set of 39.** All payment must be in U.S. funds drawn on a U.S. bank. Make all checks payable to Wizard Press. Offer good only while supply lasts. Please allow 12 to 16 weeks for delivery. Changes of address will not be forwarded unless Wizard Press is notified in writing by January 15, 1996.

THIS OFFER EXPIRES JANUARY 15, 1996—GET TO IT!

MARVEL OVERPOWER LOGOTYPE ™ & © Fleer Corp.

***Wizard*, by staying in touch with hundreds of retailers throughout the country, keeps a close eye on the country's hottest back issues. Here are October's hottest back issues.**

top 10 comics

1. LADY DEATH #1 (mini-series)

WRITER: Brian Pulido ARTIST: Steven Hughes

Lady Death has a cool job. She gets to run the "Endless Graveyard," which, we guess, is where Morpheus is a-gonna go now that he's slabbed out. (Whoa! Cross-genre reference! Get it? Morpheus? Dream of The Endless? Endless Graveyard? Whatever.)

Anyhoo, running the Endless Graveyard must be quite the responsibility, kind of like being the Pope, only you don't get to wear a cool hat like the Pope does. Think about all the dead people there are for her to keep track of. A lot. She's probably got almost as many dead people as there are living people who'd love to lay their hands on this Chromium-clad baby.

2. THE X-FILES #1

WRITER: Stefan Petrucha ARTIST: Charles Adlard

In this issue, Professor Xavier and Cyclops go up against the Brotherhood of Evil Mutants in the Savage Land! What's that? Wrong "X"? Sorry. So easy to get mixed up these days.

Despite the fact that it's a pretty darned popular comic nowadays, plus well-written and well-drawn, we just can't help but get torqued off at this whole wasteful X-Files thing. Talk about your government excesses! We don't care about verifying UFOs—fix our friggin' potholes already! We don't need secret agents hunting pyrotechnic circus geeks. We need guys spreading asphalt on the freeway! Then again, *Adventures of Highway Department Man* wouldn't make for a very interesting comic.

3. SHI #1

WRITERS: W. Tucci and P. Gutierrez
ARTISTS: W. Tucci and H. Mercadoocasio

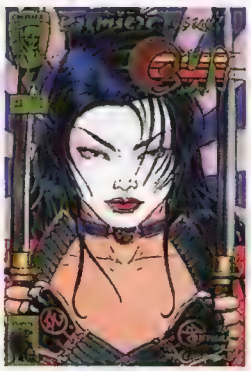
Hey! We think we're onto something here! Check it out:

Lady Death—She's pasty as all hell.

That *X-Files* Dana Scully chick—She looks like she don't get too much sun herself. And she's always wearing a trench coat.

Shi—Again, some frail whose face is whiter than Moby Dick.

People say "Bad Girls" are all the rage? Try Pasty Girls! That's where it's at! Get out of the tanning booths, ladies! Shut yourself in a windowless room for six months and you, too, can be a comic book heroine! And carry swords. Big swords. That helps.



NUMBER THREE

NUMBER FOUR

4. X-MEN ALPHA

WRITERS: Scott Lobdell and Mark Waid
ARTISTS: Roger Cruz and Tim Townsend

Whoa, Nellie! Here's where it all starts—"The Age of Apocalypse"! This book is just the bee's knees with comic geeks everywhere, despite the nasty time paradox. Now if Legion goes back in time and kills his dad before he's even born, how can he be alive to go back in time in the first place? Hmmm? Anyone know? Anyone? Anyone? Bueller?

Yeah, it's a thorny question, but the fact of the matter is that the "A of A" was the comic event of the year and every mutant-lover worth his genes wants one of these.

NUMBER FIVE

5. X-MAN #1

WRITER: Jeph Loeb
ARTISTS: Steve Skroce with inkers Sellers, Smith, LaRosa and Conrad

So anyways, this Nate Summers guy seems pretty popular since he came back from the Age of Apocalypse and is all young and stuff. But y'know who's even more popular? More interesting? More intriguing? The nasty time-flip Beast! Hey, he came back too, *and* they just revealed that he created the Morlocks. X-Man may be riding high now, but he just might be playing second fiddle to the beastly Beast sometime soon.

6. GEN[13] #1 (ONGOING SERIES)

WRITER: Brandon Choi
ARTISTS: J. Scott Campbell and Alex Garner

Want to know what makes *Gen[13]* so gosh-darned popular? It's all about adolescent wish-fulfillment. Everything a 14-year-old wants or can identify with is here. Want to hang by the pool with fabulous comic book babes and show them your boogers? We got Grunge. Are you an adolescent girl self-conscious about your weight? Well, so is Freefall. Bellybutton rings? We think the whole team has 'em. It's your total 14-year-old angst-and-pimple package.

NUMBER SIX

NUMBER SEVEN

7. THE X-FILES #2

WRITER: Stefan Petrucha
ARTIST: Charles Adlard

Y'know how cool the people at Topps Comics are? When this whole *X-Files* comic thing took off, they reprinted the first three issues in the *X-Files Special Edition* and gave you all three stories for the low price of...drumroll, please...only $3.95! And *X-Files* #1 and #2 are still two of the top back issues around. Sheesh. This thing is a licensed-property phenomenon that hasn't been seen in comics since the days of *Thundercats*.

NUMBER EIGHT

8. ASH #1

WRITERS: Joe Quesada and Jimmy Palmiotti
ARTISTS: Joe Quesada and Jimmy Palmiotti

These guys, Quesada and Palmiotti, sound more like Mexican food than comic creators. "Excuse me? Waiter? I'll have the chicken quesada with extra palmiotti sauce." But all culinary kidding aside, this comic is in the midst of a slow burn up the charts. It took people a while to notice *Ash*, but now that they have, the adventures of superhero/firefighter Ashley Quinn and his purple motorcycle (we think he stole it from Prince) are pretty popular indeed.

9. SHI #2

WRITERS: W. Tucci and P. Gutierrez
ARTISTS: W. Tucci and M. Bair with Nelson Asencio

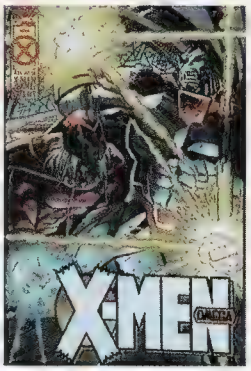
The most confusing name and logo in comics makes its second appearance on our charts this month. For the record, it's pronounced "she," not "shy." And yes, it is spelled "Shi," not "Chi," like some people seem to think. And it's published in Queens, N.Y., where all the addresses have block numbers and house numbers and a dash in the middle. Good thing this quality-filled comic is so well-liked, 'cause it sure can get confusing.

NUMBER NINE

10. X-MEN OMEGA

WRITERS: Scott Lobdell and Mark Waid
ARTISTS: Cruz, LaRosa, Townsend, Kesel, Candelario, Hanna and Milgrom

Kinda appropriate that we end this little countdown with *X-Men Omega*, ain't it? Omega is, after all, the last letter in the Greek alphabet. And this comic is the last chapter in the oh-so-popular "Age of Apocalypse" storyline. But why did Marvel skip right from Alpha to Omega? What about the other Greek letters? Where's Beta? And you know we've always been huge fans of Delta. Where's the justice, dammit? WHERE?!?

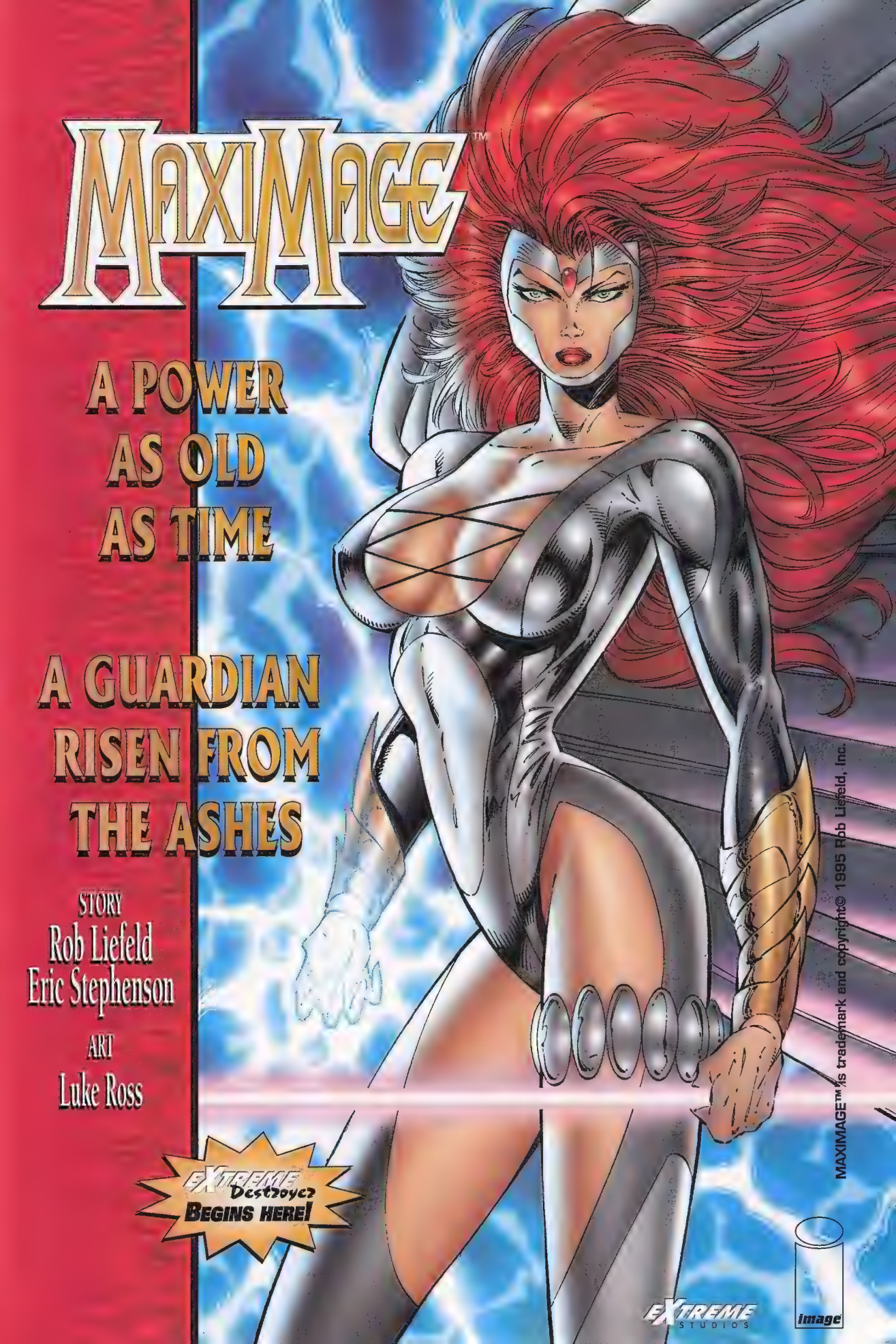


NUMBER TEN

THE NEXT TEN

THE NEXT 10 HOT BOOKS AND THE COMPANIES THAT MAKE THEM

11. VENG. OF VAMPIRELLA #1 HARRIS
12. WEAPON X #1 MARVEL
13. LADY DEATH: B.H.A.H. #1 CHAOS!
14. WOLVERINE #75 MARVEL
15. LADY DEATH (mini-series) #2 CHAOS!
16. GEN[13] (mini-series) #1 IMAGE
17. GEN[13] (reg. series) #2 IMAGE
18. PREACHER #1 VERTIGO/DC
19. AMAZ. SPIDER-MAN #400 MARVEL
20. GENERATION X #1 MARVEL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A POWER AS OLD AS TIME
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STORY
Rob Liefeld
Eric Stephenson
ART
Luke Ross
EXTREME Destroyer BEGINS HERE!
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EXTREME STUDIOS
image

COMIC WATCH

BACK ISSUES TO KEEP YOUR EYE ON

The Spectacular Spider-Man #226

WRITER: **TOM DEFALCO**

ARTISTS: **SAL BUSCEMA & BILL SIENKIEWICZ**

PUBLISHER: **MARVEL**

RELEASE DATE: **JULY 1995**

Boy, do I pity new readers trying to pick up a copy of any Spider-Man title and trying to follow the storyline. For those of you who haven't been following (and enjoy headaches), here's a brief summary of what Spidey's about right now. Ready? The Jackal clones Spider-Man and the two Spideys fight. The Clone dies and gets dropped down a smokestack, while the other goes on and lives his life as Spidey. The Clone gets real better after he dies, comes back, finds out he's a clone, and goes into self-imposed exile. Then, along with a second clone called Kaine, he returns once more as the Scarlet Spider, confronts Spidey, and we learn that the Clone is really Spider-Man and Spider-Man is really a clone. Along the way, Aunt May dies, Mary Jane discovers she's pregnant and readers everywhere reach for Advil. *Spectacular Spider-Man* #226 is the ish in which the Scarlet Spider is revealed to be the real Spidey (for now anyway).

GOOD & CHEAP

GOOD READIN' BACK-ISSUES YOU CAN BUY FOR PEANUTS!

BY BRIAN CUNNINGHAM

Squadron Supreme #1-#12

WRITER: **MARK GRUENWALD**

ARTISTS: **PAUL RYAN, BOB HALL, JOHN BUSCEMA, SAM DE LA ROSA, JOHN BEATTY, JACKSON GUICE, KEITH WILLIAMS**

CURRENT TOTAL VALUE: **$23.50**

This maxi-series poses the question: "What if benevolent superheroes take over the world to make it a better place?" It also answers it—quite well, in fact. And the superheroes are the Squadron Supreme (who were modeled after DC's old Justice League of America team—can you spot who's modeled after who?).

Taking place after the events of *Defenders* #112-#114, the Squadron must pick up the pieces of their shattered world. They decide to become the rulers of the United States by setting up a utopia, with them making all the rules.

But this presents new problems. Firstly, founding member Nighthawk is completely opposed to the utopia and quits to form an opposition force. Secondly, the Squadron abandons all hope of a private life as everyone reveals their identities to the public. Lastly, the Squadron embarks on seemingly impossible missions like curing cancer and modifying behavior to prevent criminals from committing further crimes.

Plus, ever wonder if Superman and Wonder Woman could become romantically involved? How 'bout whether Firestorm causes cancer to those around him? Can Superman become blind? Can Lex Luthor be a hero after all? Through their Squadron counterparts, this series answers all those tidbits with surprising results.

The series is not without its casualties, however, as Nighthawk's group struggles to restore democracy in the series' climactic last issue.

Does absolute power corrupt absolutely? Find out here.

PICKS

a listing of the hottest books as selected by the WIZARD staff, shipping in November

SENSATIONAL SPIDER-MAN #0

Writer: Dan Jurgens
Artists: Dan Jurgens & Klaus Janson
Release Date: November 7
Cover Price: $4.95

MARVEL This comic begins a brand-new chapter in Spider-Man's life!! Yeah, yeah, we know—been there, done that. But this time it looks like Marvel means it.

Ben Reilly, who grew up as Peter Parker and accidentally got switched with the clone in *Amazing Spider-Man* #149 (oops), is back in the Spider-suit for good. And not only do we get a newly tweaked suit (designed by Mark Bagley), but this issue introduces a new supporting cast, romantic interest, job, apartment, the whole bean burrito. If that weren't enough, it introduces fan-favorite Dan Jurgens to our favorite neighborhood web-slinger.

"We intend to reinvigorate Spider-Man and create a whole new world for him," says writer/artist Jurgens. "With Ben Reilly we can start from square one, and I intend to use that to make Spider-Man a lot of fun." Fans upset with the recent downer tone in the Spider-titles can jump back on, he promises. "For a long time, there's been a destructive momentum in the Spiderverse that's been upsetting the status quo," he understates. "Now we're at ground zero, ready to start over and build things back up again. I think that's a heck of a lot more fun."

Jurgens points out that this is the guy who got bit by the radioactive spider and grew up with Aunt May and Uncle Ben. "He's the real deal, but he's not the one married to Mary Jane," he explains. "That makes him footloose and fancy free, and it means we can introduce new female characters for him to meet." In fact, he adds, "I'll be focusing on the civilian characters more and adding lots of soap opera, because that's part of the heritage."

Adding to the festivities will be the lenticular cover that causes the image to change as you move it! Whoo!

SABRETOOTH SPECIAL #1

Writer: Fabian Nicieza
Artist: Gary Frank
Release Date: November 28
Cover Price: $4.95

MARVEL Some writers have no respect for great institutions, you know? Take Fabian Nicieza, writer on the Sabretooth one-shot, which continues from *Uncanny X-Men* #328 and *X-Men* #48. We figured we'd pick his little comic and show our appreciation for that swell butt-kissing interview he did in issue #50 with the Head Cheese. Oh wait, that's *Big* Cheese; head cheese is something far worse than even Gareb.

Anyway, we ring up Fabian to get the scoop, figuring he'll return our call instantaneously like comics bigwigs usually do. So two whole days later when we hit the office, here's what's playing on the Picks Central answering machine: "Hi, this is Fabian. Once again, *Wizard* goes out on a limb with its Hot Pick, choosing Sabretooth's one-shot, in which Sabretooth has escaped from the mansion and is tearing a bloody rampage through New York. The X-Men have to stop him—but at what cost? Yeah, that's a heck of a stretch there, *Wizard*, picking this one as a Hot Pick. Yeah, this one wasn't going to sell without your help. Maybe you should have picked *Captain Marvel* #2 as your Hot Pick. In that one, the main character gets laid. Now that's a stretch for a Hot Pick."

It's tough getting respect these days, you know?

GREEN LANTERN/SILVER SURFER

Writer: Ron Marz
Artists: Darryl Banks & Terry Austin
Release Date: November 28
Cover Price: $4.95

DC COMICS/MARVEL Talk about your cosmic crossovers! This book combines two of the most powerful heroes in the DC/Marvel Universe against two of its most overwhelming foes—Thanos and Parallax (a.k.a. Hal Jordan, the rogue Green Lantern)! "This one's a little different than most crossovers," says writer Ron Marz. That's because each bad guy tricks one of the heroes into helping him!

Here's the set-up: Thanos enters the DC Universe through a rift and deceives Kyle (Green Lantern) Rayner into helping him tap the power ring like a big green Energizer. That gives Thanos the power he needs to destroy the universe.

Meanwhile, Parallax crashes into the Marvel Universe through the rift. He's chasing the Cyborg Superman, who Hal wants to pulverize because he made Coast City go boom. Parallax meets the Surfer and talks him into using his cosmic power to help recreate the universe the way Hal thinks it ought to be.

With Thanos using Kyle to destroy everything and Hal using the Surfer to recreate everything, and the two heroes slowly realizing what the heck's happening, you just know that none of these guys are really going to get along. That results in an ultimate clash among all four at the center of the universe! "The art is wonderful," Marz adds. "These are some absolutely gorgeous pages."

SIN CITY: SILENT NIGHT

Writer: Frank Miller
Artist: Frank Miller
Release Date: November 28
Cover Price: $2.95

DARK HORSE Frank Miller has done some top-notch comics work through the years. So we sit up and take notice when Frank tells us that this stand-alone issue is something special. "I've got to say that of all the art jobs I've ever done, this is the one I'm proudest of," he says. "Something really good happened here."

His art style, he explains, "is much more illustrative than a lot of things I've done. The storytelling is extremely unusual." For one thing, the tale is nearly wordless, employing just one word balloon in its entire 26 pages. But it still features the stark black-and-white style that provides such a moody, *noir* impact to the series.

He sums up the basic plot simply. "It's Christmas Eve, and Marv can't sleep, so he goes out for a walk," he says. "And he plays a sort of Good Samaritan. But this is Marv," he chuckles, "so it's a different kind of Good Samaritan."

But Miller demurs on any other goodies. "I'm deliberately keeping quiet on this one, because I think it has to be read as a graphic and experienced," he says. "I would rather take the chance that people will show up and enjoy it when they see it." Sounds like the odds are pretty good on that one.

CEREBUS #200

Writer: Dave Sim
Artists: Dave Sim & Gerhard
Release Date: November 28
Cover Price: $2.25

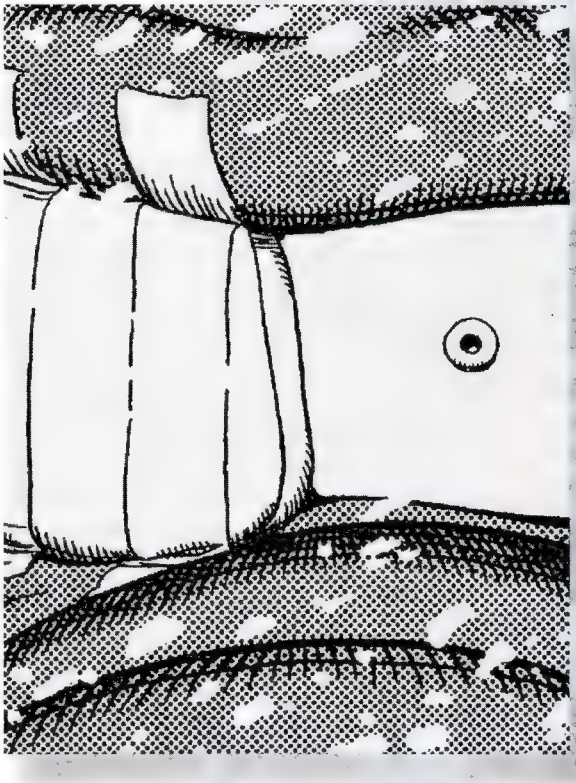
AARDVARK-VANAHEIM A 300-issue plan might sound pretty darn ambitious, but hey, when you're on #200, it's not that big a deal. No, no, wait. It *is* a big deal, but the whole 300 thing is kinda... Aw, skip it. You know what we mean.

Considered the Rock of Gibraltar of the small press, Dave Sim's *Cerebus* is experiencing a rather drastic change in its status quo (as you can probably tell with the art to the right of this). Yes, the short ill-tempered aardvark known as Cerebus loses an eye. (Y'know, that's gotta hurt really, really, really, reeeeeally bad.)

Cerebus #200 ends the current *Cerebus* storyline titled "Minds," and also serves as the conclusion of the giant 50-issue "Mothers & Daughters" opus, as well as a journey of self-discovery for Cerebus. Sim says of the issue, "I'm not sure if it's going to represent a change in his character. We'll have to wait for the last 100 issues to find that out. As Cerebus' creator, I'm certainly giving it the old college try to find some sort of spark of life underneath that gray, obnoxious exterior, and see if he can't become a better character for it."

This gala issue leads into the next *Cerebus* opus, titled "Guys," and sets up the rest of the Cerebus saga for the last 100 issues. (Geez, didn't it seem like the halfway point, #150, just passed? We're gettin' old, man.)

—Big Picks written by Craig Shutt



MORE PICKS

The following pages list the peachiest titles shipping in November, as selected and written by the *Wizard* staff.

AQUAMAN #16

DC COMICS Since the underwater city of Poseidonis has risen to the top of the ocean, there's a bit of a world crisis. So when those candy-assed Justice Leaguers show up to see what's up, Aquaman gets a bit defensive. By Peter David, Marty Egeland and Howard Shum. **$1.75**

AVENGERS #394

MARVEL Thief! Judas! Traitorous rat-bastard scum! Earth's Mightiest Heroes finally find out just who the turncoat in the team is! Just who is this murdering letch? Heck, if we toldja that, it'd take alla the fun out of it. By Bob Harras, Mike Deodato Jr. and Tom Palmer. **$1.50**

BATMAN AND ROBIN ADVENTURES #3

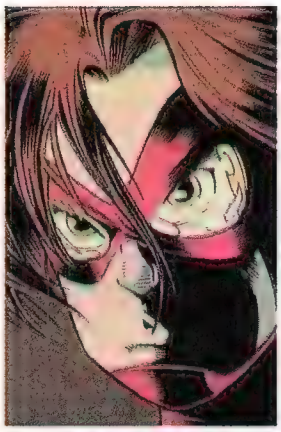
DC COMICS Riddle me this: What happens when the Riddler invades a holiday party in Gotham to expose Batman and Robin, but he can't figure out which partygoers are secretly the Dynamic Duo? Simple: He just kills everybody! Tons o' fun by Paul Dini, Ty Templeton and Rick Burchett. **$1.75**

BATMAN BOOKS

DC COMICS In *Batman* #526, the Dark Knight's having second thoughts about his relationship with Alfred, Robin and Nightwing. (Maybe he'll give it all up and become the Scarlet Bat!) When you're done watchin' ol' Batty Boy brood, check out *Batman: Shadow of the Bat* #46. Cornelius Stirk, a recent escapee from Arkham Asylum (Hey, nice job, Arkham!), is tryin' to snuff out the lives of Gotham's mayor and district attorney. (Wouldn't it be great to be a politician in Gotham?) And speakin' of snuffing things, some freak by the name of Agent Orange is killing off alla Gotham's plants over in *Detective Comics* #693. But before Batman even gets there, a certain babe by the name of Poison Ivy is already on the scene. (I wouldn't mind deflowering *her*!) Also, check out the effervescent *Batman Chronicles* #3. This all-villain issue features plenty o' fun with The Riddler, Killer Croc and Mr. Zsasz (Hey, say his last name backwards!). And to round off your Bat-Month, pick up *The Joker: Devil's Advocate Hardcover Graphic Novel*. After the Joker is caught by Batman for a savagely violent murder spree, he's finally declared competent enough to stand trial before a state that has the death penalty. The problem (hey, you knew there'd be one) is that Batman thinks the Joker's innocent of this particular crime, but isn't sure whether the Joker should pay for a lifetime of murder and mayhem or not. (We'd let him fry.) **$1.95 EACH; $2.95—*BATMAN CHRONICLES*; $24.95—*DEVIL'S ADVOCATE***

CAPTAIN AMERICA #447

ICON #33



IMPULSE #10

THE JOKER: DEVIL'S ADVOCATE

CAPTAIN AMERICA #447

MARVEL "Operation Rebirth," Part 3 (of 4). Hey, if any of youse out there haven't tried Cap in a while, or think he's lame, check this book out! The Waid/Garney team have made *Captain America* one of Marvel's best books! Look into this ish and watch as the quest for the Cosmic Cube reaches fruition, and we learn who's actually got the damn thing. By Mark Waid and Ron Garney. **$1.50**

CYBERFORCE #18

IMAGE Some spooky being from another universe comes to Earth and tries to claim Impact's body for himself. You better believe Cyberforce tries its darnedest to stop that from happenin'! Yup, looks like a fight to us too. By Brian Haberlin and David Finch. **$2.25**

DAWN #3 (of 5)

SIRIUS ENTERTAINMENT Now that Dawn's got Lucifer's Halo, she gives it to Darrian Oshaka, which just causes all sorts o' trouble. Now Darian finds himself in a war between Heaven and Hell as tons of angels and demons are unleashed upon him. I wonder if it's too late to convert? By Joseph Michael Linsner. **$2.95**

FLASH #109

DC COMICS "Dead Heat," Part 2 (of 6). The whole gang learns the super-secret origin of that villainous superduper-speedster, Savitar. Also, a certain Iris Allen returns (yeah, last time we checked, Bucky was still the only comic character who's still dead), and you'll witness Max Mercury's tragic fate. The story continues over in *Impulse* #10. By Mark Waid, Oscar Jimenez and Jose Marzan Jr. **$1.75**

GREEN LANTERN #70

DC COMICS Aww, say it ain't so, Kyle. Tell us it's just a little tiff. Well, folks, looks like Mr. Rayner and Ms. Troy are splittin' up for good. Apparently those lovebirds just couldn't work things out. Also, Kyle gets a visit from John

MORE PICKS

Stewart. By Ron Marz, Paul Pelletier and Romeo Tanghal. Marz says, "It's the most character-driven issue we've had so far. The issue is entirely about Donna and Kyle's relationship hitting the rocks because of something Kyle does that makes them both re-examine the way they think of the relationship. We also have an opportunity to see Kyle with John Stewart. Donna brings John Stewart to meet Kyle, and obviously they have a lot to talk about." **$1.75**

ICON #33

MILESTONE/DC If you don't know who Icon and Rocket are, then you haven't been readin' this here comic. And that's just darn rude, seein' as how the two of them are fighting like crazy to save Earth from a massive interstellar war between the Galactic Cooperative and some alien armada. So show some support! By Dwayne McDuffie, M.D. Bright and Romeo Tanghal. **$2.50**

IMPULSE #10

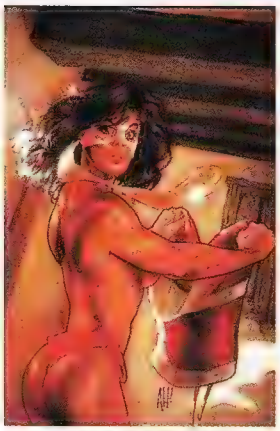
DC COMICS "Dead Heat," Part 3 (of 6). Little Bart Allen's got no super-speed and now his closest friend's life is in jeopardy. Will he be able to adjust to life as just an ordinary teenager? And save his buddy as well? By Mark Waid, Humberto Ramos and Wayne Faucher. Waid says, "[For] the first time in his life, Bart has to learn to cope without super-speed. The world is more challenging to him than ever before, and with Max Mercury's life on the line, there's some question as to whether or not he can move in time to save Max." **$1.75**

LADY RAWHIDE #3 (of 5)

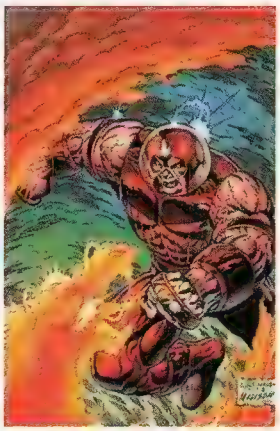
TOPPS COMICS Here's a peculiar thing. Lady Rawhide stops Don Rafael Carmelo from attacking his wife Dona Antonia. (No, that's not the strange thing.) Instead of being thanked, Dona Antonia attacks and tries to kill Lady Rawhide! What's even worse, Ms. Rawhide's cover may be blown when she attempts to sneak back into the Carmelos' ranchero. Boy, next thing you know she'll start being affected by gravity. By Don McGregor, Mike Mayhew and Jimmy Palmiotti. **$2.95**

LEAGUE OF JUSTICE #1

DC COMICS This funky Elseworlds tale sees a bunch of teenagers transported to a medieval world where they find themselves in the middle of a war between the dark lords of the netherworld and a whole bunch o' good guys. (Hey, just like that cool old "Dungeons & Dragons" cartoon. Wonder if Uni will show up?) These good guys in question just happen to be some pretty different versions of a familiar group of DC heroes that are always out for "justice." Hmmm... By Ed Hannigan and Dick Giordano. **$5.95**



LADY RAWHIDE #3



T.P.R.: THE ALL NEW EXILES #2

T.P.R.: MANTRA #2

T.P.R.: PRIME #2

THE PHOENIX RESURRECTION

MALIBU/MARVEL Something big and bad is heading to the Ultraverse. You may remember her from those ol' X-Men issues where those merry mutants tussled with...The Phoenix! This 21-page story, which is serialized as a seven-chapter flip-story in all of this month's Ultraverse books, leads into next month's X-Men/Ultraverse project. Check out *The All New Exiles* #2, *Mantra* #2, *The Night Man* #2, *Prime* #2, *Rune* #2, *Siren* #2 and *UltraForce* #2 for this special introduction to The Phoenix Resurrection! **$1.50 EACH**

POWERS THAT BE #1

BROADWAY COMICS Here's somethin' different. A young kid named Cor (whose dad just happens to be from some other planet) wakes up in New York City to find a 1989 Cadillac Sedan...impaled on the top of the Chrysler Building! You'll also meet a pretty hot babe called Fatale, who's definitely more than a handful. Confused and intrigued? Join the club. By Jim Shooter, Andrew Wendel, J.G. Jones, Art Nichols and Frank McLaughlin. **$2.50**

PROPHET #3

IMAGE In a surprising plot twist, Prophet attempts to uncover more secrets about his past. Go figure. By Chuck Dixon and Stephen Platt. **$2.50**

RIPCLAW #2

IMAGE Ripclaw keeps findin' more and more mystical and magical things goin' on in the world. But not everyone seems to be out for humanity's best interests. Some even want to rule the world! Hmmm...smells like a fight with lots of vertical two-page splash pages to us. By David Wohl and Anthony Winn. **$2.50**

ROBIN #24

DC COMICS In a moment of confusion, Robin misunderstands Charaxes' offer for dinner and heads to the creature's house hoping for a nice home-cooked meal. Silly Robin—you *are* the meal. But just wait till ya see who comes to Robin's aid. (Hint: It ain't Batman!) By Chuck Dixon, Aaron Lopresti and Stan Woch. **$1.95**

SANDMAN #74

VERTIGO/DC All right, people. You've got one more issue before this

Temptation™

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Ryan Boord - writer

Michael Vargo - art

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TEMPTING YOU IN DECEMBER

MORE PICKS

baby's a wrap. In this issue, one final story is told between the current Sandman (that'd be Daniel) and the six-feet-under Sandman (that'd be ol' Morphy). A touching tale by Neil Gaiman and Jon J. Muth. For you mature freaks. **$2.50**

SANDMAN MYSTERY THEATRE #34

VERTIGO/DC "The Python," Part 2 (of 4). Looks like there's a killer on the loose in Manhattan slicin' up victims. The cops and the coroner, however, have some very conflicting suspicions. And just where's the Sandman? Why, he's in disguise, of course. By Matt Wagner, Steven Seagle and Warren Pleece. This one's kinda for you mature folks too. **$2.25**

SPAWN #38-#39

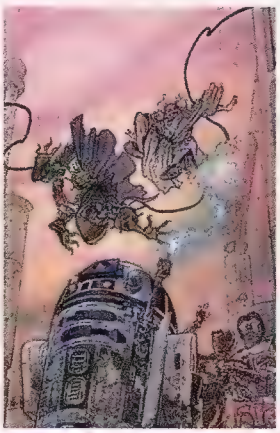
IMAGE With guest artists Tony Daniel and Kevin Conrad on issue #38, you'll see the return of the nastier and deadlier Curse, who gets his mouth washed out with soap and sent to his room with no supper. There's also a new crimefighter on the streets known as APE-X. Then, over in *Spawn* #39 (Wow, two issues in one month! Somebody pinch me!), you'll read a most touching story about a little boy who just wants to help his poverty-stricken family. (Don't worry, there's a happy ending!) By Todd McFarlane and Greg Capullo. **$1.95 EACH**

THE SPECTRE #37

DC COMICS "The Haunting of America" begins as The Spectre heads on a journey across the United States. This issue sees the Spectre vowing revenge on the person who shot Jim Corrigan's partner Nate Kane. But things get sticky, when the shooting is somehow linked to the founders of our very country and a certain thing called the "talisman." Ooooh. By John Ostrander and Tom Mandrake. **$2.25**

STAR WARS BOOKS

DARK HORSE While Luke is busy roundin' up various Jedi for battle in *Star Wars: Heir to the Empire* #2, Grand Admiral Thrawn and Joruus C'Baoth try to end the battle before it even begins. Looks like Luke's gotta go solo against Thrawn or the galaxy'll never forgive him. When you're done sweatin', pick up *Star Wars: X-Wing—Rogue Squadron* #5 for "The Phantom Affair," Part 1. Some AEA (Ante-Endor Association) freaks are goin' around tellin' people that the Battle of Endor never happened. So when Rogue Squadron member Tycho meets up with these punks, ya better believe there's gonna be a bit of a skirmish. Then check out *Star Wars: Tales of the Jedi—The Sith War* #4 (of 6). Jedi fights Jedi as Exar Kun and his followers rise against their former Jedi Masters.



STAR WARS: DROIDS #7

STAR WARS: EMPIRE'S END #2

STAR WARS: TALES ... SITH WAR #4

STAR WARS: X-WING—ROGUE SQUADRON #5

Finished so soon? Well, then go read *Star Wars: Empire's End* #2 (of 2), where a rapidly dying Emperor must get a hold of Han and Leia's son, Anakin, to save his life. And finally, check out *Star Wars: Droids* #7, where Artoo & Threepio must overthrow Dictator-Forever Craw and rescue their friend Smiley. **$2.95 EACH; $2.50—*THE SITH WAR, DROIDS***

STRANGERS IN PARADISE #8

ABSTRACT STUDIOS This is it! The one you've been waitin' for! Learn the truth about Mrs. Parker and Katchoo's relationship as they finally confront each other. You'll also get the skinny on a lot more of Katchoo's li'l secrets. By Terry Moore, who says, "The readers have been waiting a long time to find this out. I promise to reveal all these secrets about Katchoo's past and what's the deal with all the characters and the whole story. BUT, I also promise to scare the hell out of you at the very end. It has a cliffhanger ending that I bet you've never seen in a comic before. When I thought of it, I was jumping around the room for an hour and a half. I went nuts!" **$2.75**

SUPERBOY #23

DC COMICS That slimy weasel The Technician has stolen Superboy's mega-powerful visor and is actually usin' it against Superboy! So, the Kid's gotta take on his own power, or else Tana just might buy it! By Karl Kesel, Tom Grummett and Doug Hazlewood. **$1.95**

SUPERMAN BOOKS

DC COMICS "Wanted. Waaaaanted. Dead or alive. I'm a cowboy...on a steel horse I ride..." Looks like Supes is still in trouble with the law (intergalactic law, that is). Over in *Action Comics* #717, the Big S finds himself running from not only the Intergalactic Tribunal, but the Cyborg as well! Lug yer ball 'n' chain over to *Superman: The Man of Steel* #52, where Superman gives it to the Cyborg but good. Unfortunately, those silly li'l planet-destroyin' charges still stand. For the trial's final outcome, don't miss *Superman* #108, where the Man of Steel's sentence is passed. He's rocketed towards his former homeworld (or what's left of it now). But with all those huge chunks o' Kryptonite just floatin' around there, won't that mean...ohhh! I get it. Nice knowin' ya, Supes! And just to wrap up alla those loose ends, pick up *Adventures of Superman* #531 for the conclusion to "The Trial of Superman." Based on the trial's outcome, Alpha Centurion's got a BIG decision to make. Not a good month to be a Superman fan. **$1.95 EACH**

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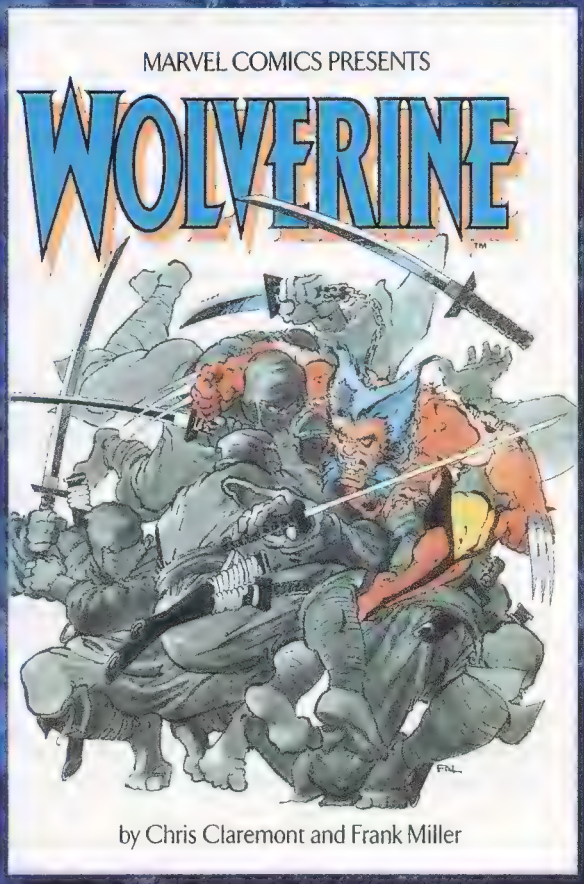

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MORE PICKS

THOR #494

MARVEL By Ymir's crusty beard and Balder's swollen prostate! This here issue holds the Earth-shattering conclusion to the "Worldengine" saga. Find out if the once (and hopefully future) mighty Thor can prevent the devastating and horrific effects of a post-Ragnarok world. By Warren Ellis and Mike Deodato Jr. **$1.50**

TUG & BUSTER #1

ART & SOUL COMICS This hysterical new series by Marc Hempel (you might remember him from *The Sandman* and *Gregory*) pokes fun at the pure manliness of the male species. There's the large, rarely speakin' TUG, who's got like 90 gallons of oil in his hair and a perpetual 5 o'clock shadow. And then, of course, there's his li'l buddy buster, who worships TUG for all that he is! Check out these two pals as they embark on an eternal quest for babes! **$2.95**

TUROK: THE HUNTED #1-#2 (of 2)

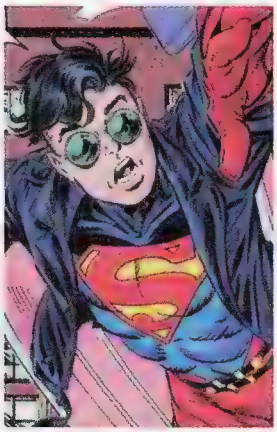
ACCLAIM Turok and his Kiowa buddies come across a hunter who's lookin' for the mythical White Buffalo. While his pals try to stop a group of these hunters, Turok joins up with the killers instead and becomes their guide. (No, Turok hasn't lost his values, he's just hoping to teach the hunters the rights and wrongs about hunting.) By Mike Grell, Mike Deodato Jr. and Mozart Cuoto. Also, be sure to check out *Turok, Dinosaur Hunter* #40, in which Turok and his longtime arch-enemy Longhunter team up to stop a bunch of time-torn outlaws. (Boy, Turok's taking that "Love your enemies" idea a bit too far...) By Timothy Truman and Paul Gulacy. **$2.50 EACH**

WOLVERINE #97

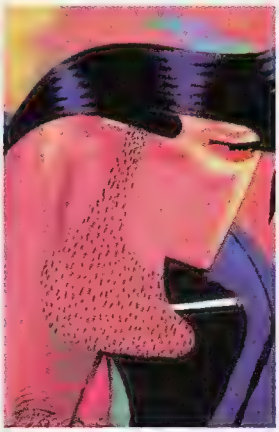
MARVEL Well, kiddies, looks like you may be gettin' your wish soon. Now that Cable's nasty son Genesis has the adamantium, he just needs somewhere (or *someone*) to put it so he can have his very own agent of death and destruction. And guess who the likely victim is? (Hint: He's short, mean, hairy, has a bunch o' claws and he's not Gary Coleman.) By Larry Hama, Adam Kubert and Dan Green. **$1.95**

THE X-FILES #12

TOPPS COMICS "Feelings of Unreality," Part 3 (of 3). Wow! Talk about givin' you everything you want this month! This ish sees Scully and Mulder finally prove the existence of UFOs before a big government committee panel thingie, as well as revealing and discovering the full scoop behind the inner government's conspiracy! Oh yeah, Scully and Mulder also fall in love or something. By Stefan Petrucha and Charles Adlard. **$2.95**



SUPERBOY #23



TUG & BUSTER #1

UNCANNY X-MEN #328

THE X-FILES #12

X-MEN BOOKS

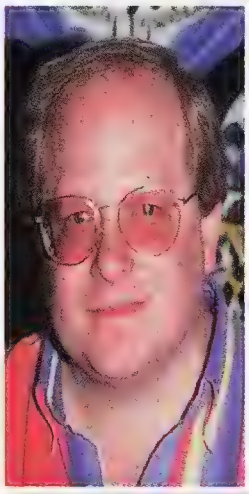
MARVEL Getcher mutants! Getcher meee-yoootants heeeere! *Uncanny X-Men* #328 sees Sabretooth unleashed!! The big nasty guy was just playin' the rest o' the team for a bunch o' pansies. So Creed's clawin' his way outta the X-Mansion! And be sure not to miss *X-Men* #48, where the gang's still huntin' for Creed. **$1.95 EACH** **W**

WHAT I'M READING

name: **Mark Waid**

occupation: **Writer of DC's *Flash* and *Impulse*, and Marvel's *Captain America* and *X-Men*.**

currently reads: "*Hate* is just a scream. It's one of the few comics that actually make me laugh out loud. I'm reading *Uncle Scrooge* because I really dig Don Rosa's life and times of Scrooge McDuck. *Stray Bullets* is interesting. *Astro City* I'm liking a lot. I like Kurt's everyman perspective on stuff. Kurt has a lot of imagination and Kurt unleashed is fun to watch. And I like *Skrull Kill Krew* because anything that's that irreverent to the Marvel Universe is thumbs up with me."



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SCORE	RANK
0-4	A bunch of really contrived and convoluted new plotlines start up in the X-Men books…and they don't go anywhere! (The horror!)
5-14	Jimmy uses his signal watch to show off to his friends just as Superman is about to bag Lois, and Supes kicks Jimmy's colon into his throat.
15-19	Helspont sticks the business end of a bicycle pump into Emp's ass, and pumps that dirty midget till he bursts.
20	It turns out that for the past 20 years, Spider-Man's really been a clone, and the real Spidey was in hiding. Spooky.

1. Which ex-X-Man was saved from an angry mob who believed him a demon and were about to run a stake through his li'l mutant heart?
A) Caliban
B) Leech
C) Nightcrawler
D) The Beast

2. J. Jonah Jameson's fairly irritating son was transformed into a werewolf-like creature by:
A) a rock he found on the moon.
B) being bitten by a werewolf-like creature.
C) the curse of a gypsy woman.
D) eating human flesh while snowed-in at a remote cabin.

3. When Bruce Wayne decided to fight crime, why did he choose to dress up like a big bat?
A) He had heard the "Man of Steel" in Metropolis dressed in bright red and blue, and wanted to become his "shadow counterpart"
B) In memory of his father, who had told him stories of a giant bat-guardian who watches over your dreams
C) He felt that villains were a cowardly,superstitious lot, and as a "Batman" he would have an edge of fear over them
D) Chicks dig the cape

4. Superman is vulnerable to…
A) Kryptonite, werewolves and the color yellow.
B) Kryptonite, jade and mind-control.
C) Kryptonite, magic and vampires.
D) Kryptonite, Samsonite and El DeBarge's "Rhythm of the Night."

5. The letters in M.O.D.O.K., the grotesquely deformed (and now very dead) villain who gave Captain America such a hard time, stand for:
A) Moist Orangutans Don't...Often...uh, skip this one.
B) More Orphans...Demand...Orange...um...Kool-Aid.
C) Macadamias Originated...Daisy...oh, for God's sake, let's get this over with. It's D.
D) Mental Organism Designed Only for Killing.

6. Blackheart is the son of what cosmic evildoer?
A) Ego
B) Mephisto
C) D'spayre
D) Newt Gingrich

7. What burns at the Man-Thing's touch?
A) Evil
B) Fear
C) Guilt
D) The rash on his li'l Man-Thing

8. Which ex-Alpha Flight member freaked out at a party, bit the heads off some fish and turned into a monstrous sea creature, destroying everything in her path?
A) Aurora
B) Marrina
C) Snowbird
D) Seastar

9. Which character had four extra arms grow out from the sides of his body?
A) Dr. Octopus
B) Black Spider
C) Spider-Man
D) Sidewinder

10. The Batman villain who partially consumed his victims was:
A) The Abattoir
B) Clayface IV
C) Blockbuster
D) The Vulture

11. Which very unpleasant supervillain did Captain America defeat by beheading?
A) Batroc
B) Dragon Man
C) Crossbones
D) Baron Blood

12. The X-Men have battled which of the following monsters:
A) Frankenstein's Monster.
B) The demon lord Belasco.
C) Dracula.
D) All of the above.

13 Which of the following good guys has not been murdered and later brought back to life?
A) Magnus Robot Fighter
B) The Crow
C) The Shroud
D) Superman

14. In his first encounter with Spawn, what did the Violator do?
A) Attempt to possess Spawn's body
B) Rip out Spawn's eyes and steal his powers
C) Punch his fist through Spawn's chest to get his heart
D) Act all nervous and stuff, and there was lots of awkward silence during dinner, and when the check came no one was sure who should pay for it, and ugh, it was a mess

15. Aside from an exposed spinal cord and a cool talking smiley-face button, Evil Ernie has the power to:
A) eat the hearts of his victims and steal their memories.
B) animate the dead.
C) enter people's nightmares and steal their souls.
D) turn anyone into an evil version of themselves.

16. After John Constantine tricked the devil into curing him of cancer, what did that li'l limey do?
A) Mooned 'im
B) Told the devil "he owed him one"
C) Gave him a swirlie
D) Flipped him off

17. If Peter had thrown the football any harder when it hit Marcia in the nose, it would have:
A) pushed the cartilage of her nose up through her skull and into her brain, killing her instantly.
B) caved in and become permanently embedded in her face, forcing her to live out the rest of her life as an unholy abomination in the face of God.
C) exploded on impact, sending shards of pigskin and Brady skin everywhere, which would have so emotionally scarred Peter that he would take his own life, but not before sacrificing Kitty Carryall to his lord Satan.
D) All of the above.

18. Which superteam makes it their business to hunt down and put the hurtin' on vampires, werewolves and other rat-bastard monster types?
A) Team 7
B) WetWorks
C) Black Razors
D) The Allies

19. The ex-Youngblood member who blew his brains out and wanted to usurp the throne of Hell was:
A) Chapel.
B) Battlestone.
C) Hardrock
D) Pitchfork.

20. The most frightening thing about the comic book industry is that:
A) Publishers don't seem to care about new readers picking up a comic book for the first time, and are weaving super-complex storylines that would send a first-time reader screaming into the darkness with his pants down around his ankles.
B) Any potential new female reader, of which there are painfully few, would take a gander at just about any bad girl cover, make a weird face and quickly exit the comic store, possibly macing the clerk if he's foolish enough to ask her if she wants to join the shop's comic club.
C) More and more comic publishers and creators seem to care more about the potential merchandising of their comic book characters than the comic books themselves, letting the comics get stale and uninspired.
D) All of the above, which scares the hell out of us. W

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Statement Of Ownership, Management And Circulation
Title of Publication: *Wizard: The Guide To Comics*
Publication Number: ISSN 1065-6499
Date of Filing: September 26, 1995
Frequency of issue: Monthly
Number of issues published annually: 12
Annual subscription price: $29.95
Complete mailing address of known office of publication: 151 Wells Avenue, Congers, NY 10920-2064
Complete mailing address of the headquarters or general business office of publication: 151 Wells Avenue, Congers, NY 10920-2064
Publisher: Gareb S. Shamus, 151 Wells Avenue, Congers, NY 10920-2064
Editor-in-Chief: Patrick McCallum, 151 Wells Avenue, Congers, NY 10920-2064
Managing Editor: Joe Yanarella, 151 Wells Avenue, Congers, NY 10920-2064
Owner: Gareb Shamus Enterprises, 151 Wells Avenue, Congers, NY 10920-2064
Known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning 1 percent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities: none

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Paid or requested circulation (mailed):	33,471	40,304
Total paid and/or requested circulation:	331,124	333,293
Free distribution by mail, carrier or other means:	1,848	1,219
Total Distribution:	332,972	334,512
Copies not distributed:	4,621	4,521
Returns from news agents:	109,216	121,538
Total:	446,809	460,571
Percent paid and/or requested circulation:	99.4%	99.6%

I certify that all information furnished above is complete and correct.
(signed)
Gareb S. Shamus
President and Publisher

OVERPOWER EXPANDS!

FLEER

Get ready for the first *OverPower* expansion set. *PowerSurge*—an expansion to the popular Marvel *OverPower* collectible card game—is scheduled to be released December 6.

PowerSurge will consist of nine-card booster packs featuring 21 new heroes, accompanying specials and one additional special for each of the 39 current heroes.

Among the new heroes are Ghost Rider, Juggernaut, Mr. Sinister, Dr. Strange, Daredevil and the Scarlet Spider.

Two new missions will be introduced: Sins of the Future and Separation Anxiety. Separation Anxiety is patterned after an Acclaim video game of the same name and video game tips will be featured on card backs.

Six new teamwork cards will also be introduced.

In other *OverPower* news, effective Oct. 1, an *OverPower* hotline (1-800-OPRULES or 1-800-677-8537) will be in service. The hotline will feature 24-hour voice mail and players are encouraged to call with questions on how to play, rule interpretations and tournament support requests. All calls should be returned within 72 hours.

• Fleer Entertainment has announced that, contrary to previous information, the company will *not* be issuing a card set based on any of the Ace Ventura properties.

SKYBOX

SkyBox's second installment of "Star Trek: Voyager" cards lands on Nov. 8. The 90-card series spotlights the first season of "Voyager" in three-card summaries, in addition to a nine-card timeline mural, six trivia cards, nine 24th century technology cards, nine On-Screen Scenes cards with a view from the bridge, six Strange New Worlds cards and a production credits card.

Bonus cards include six Neelix's Recipe Cards with scratch-and-sniff printing (one in 12 packs), nine Spectra foil cards (one in 12) and an exchange card for a new Sky-Motion card that features Captain Kathryn Janeway (one in 180 packs).

Each eight-card pack carries a suggested retail price of $1.49.

• The Star Trek 30th anniversary set will consist of three phases. Phase one is scheduled to arrive in stores Dec. 13. Subsequent phases should touch down next year in May and September. The first phase will consist of 100 cards, focusing on ships and technology.

The 30th anniversary set will focus on all Star Trek properties, including "Deep Space Nine," "Next Generation," "Voyager" and Classic "Star Trek."

• Another SkyBox coming attraction is a *Toy Story* card set, based on the Disney film slated for holiday release. The 54-card set (16 cards per pack with a suggested price tag of $1.49) is slated for arrival on Nov. 22.

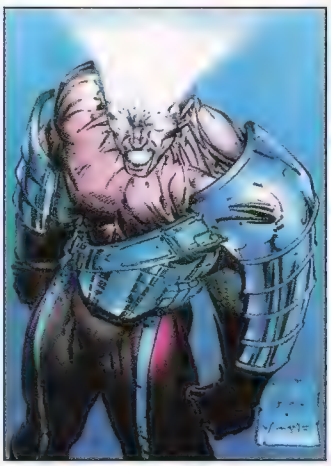
WILDSTORM PRODUCTIONS

Three new card sets from WildStorm Productions are scheduled to debut by end of year.

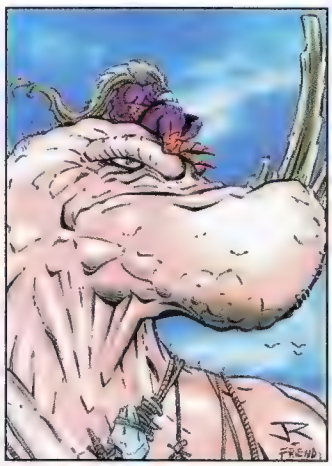
WetWorks Chromium Trading Cards, based on the comic book created by Whilce Portacio, consists of 107 all-chromium cards from such artists as Jim Lee, Kevin Maguire, Mike Wieringo, Ryan Benjamin, Scott Clark, Trevor Scott, Humberto Ramos and Portacio. Chase cards for the set—which is slated for a November release—include nine die-cut chromium cards and nine gold chromium cards of the golden WetWorks warriors.

• Two sets from WildStorm are due in December—Sam Kieth's The Maxx, and Avengelyne. Artists contributing to the 99-card, foil-stamped Maxx set include Jim Lee, Kevin Nowlan, Michael Allred, Simon Bisley, Kelley Jones and Michael Golden.

Loki's gonna meet plenty o' whupass, when the first *OverPower* expansion hits stores.



"God, it's hot in here!" WildStorm's WetWorks set.



"Now where's that li'l purple guy at?" WildStorm's The Maxx set.

Chase cards consist of nine embossed cards with art from Kieth and another set of nine painted cards.

The 99-card Avengelyne Chromium set features images from the Maximum Press comic series based on real-life model Cathy Christian. Artists represented include Rob Liefeld, Tom Raney, Lee, Ramos and Clark. Chase cards consist of nine photo-chromium cards of Cathy Christian herself and nine glow-in-the-dark chromium cards.

• Among sets planned for 1996 from WildStorm are a WildStorm Archives II set, consisting of covers, slated for February, a Joe Chiodo painted card set slated for Spring '96 and a Voodoo set, based on the WildC.A.T.s character, in May. All release dates are tentative.

DYNAMIC MARKETING

Australia's Dynamic Marketing will release Ren & Stimpy Trading Cards in the U.S. in October. The set was previously released in Australia last winter.

A special 18-card original insert set—not available in the original version—will be randomly inserted in the American rendition. Over half of the set will consist of original art.

The 106-card series includes 54 episode cards, six character cards, six Doctor Stupid (a.k.a. Stimpy) cards, 24 Mega Scope cards, 15 original cards and five "A-Z of Ren & Stimpy" cards. Chase cards include five randomly inserted "Kitty Glitter" cards using a two-way acetate and holographic foil process.

Cards will come seven cards per pack and carry a suggested retail price of $1.75.

METALLIC IMPRESSIONS

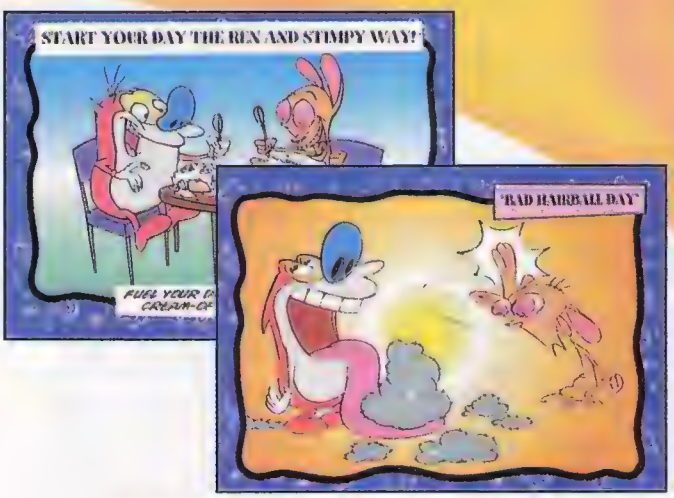
Metal Impressions unveils its third Star Wars-based metal card set with Return of the Jedi, due in December.

The Star Wars: Return of the Jedi metal set will be comprised of 20 embossed, full litho cards packaged in a collectors tin. Each set has an individually numbered Certificate of Authenticity designating its place in the limited edition of 49,000 worldwide.

Suggested retail for each set is $45-$50.

Metallic Impressions will also distribute Dark Empire II, based on the Dark Horse comic series, in February or March of next year. A Shadows of the Empire set is slated for mid-'96. W

All this truly entertaining news was brought to you by that wacky, woolly Wizard *staff and some guy named Eric.*



"My antique Jell-O collection! Stimpy...you eediot!" Dynamic Marketing's Ren & Stimpy set.

InQuest presents HIT THE DECK

The latest in collectible card game news

• Those of you waiting for the ***Magic* computer game** will have to wait a little longer. Following a major shake-up at MicroProse—including the firing of several programmers working on the *Magic* project—the CD-ROM game has been delayed up to a year.

• On the *Magic* tournament scene, Wizards of the Coast has added an experimental **"Type 1.5" tournament** to its agenda. Debuting at AndCon '95, the Type 1.5 has a new list of banned cards including Ali from Cairo, Ancestral Recall, Black Lotus, Channel, Chaos Orb, Demonic Tutor, Falling Star, Library of Alexandria, Maze of Ith, Mind Twist, Mox Emerald, Mox Jet, Mox Pearl, Mox Ruby, Mox Sapphire, Sol Ring, Timetwister, Time Walk and Wheel of Fortune. *Ice Age*'s Enduring Renewal, Jester's Cap, Jester's Mask, Zuran Orb and Zur's Weirding were added to the restricted list. It looks like Type 1.5 will become official policy soon.

It's Gandalf's cardboard debut in *Middle-earth: The Wizards!*

• Iron Crown Enterprises (I.C.E.) will release ***Middle-earth: The Wizards***, the *Lord of the Rings*-based game, sometime in mid-December. Players assume the role of one of the five Istari (wizards) of Middle-earth, forming a group of adventurers who work towards deposing the powers of Sauron, collecting treasures and defeating hazards to gain a set number of victory points.

• The hottest arcade game around, ***Killer Instinct***, is heading to collectible cards. You'll be able to play all your favorite *Killer Instinct* characters—Orchid, Jago and Riptor—as well as enjoy some spiffy card art: high-quality shots from the arcade game and never-before-seen pictures based on the original *Killer Instinct* computer models. It's due out from Topps in the spring of '96.

• FPG, the noted fantasy trading card publisher, is starting its own gaming division. Following the success of their first game, *Guardians*, co-designed and illustrated by fantasy favorite Keith Parkinson, FPG's new gaming division sets up shop in November with the debut of ***Dagger Isle*** (a 120-card set dealing with trolls, wizard cults, undead, and of course, pirates), the first expansion set for *Guardians*. FPG also promises the release of several "top secret" projects including another set for *Guardians* (tentatively titled *Drifter's Nexus*) and a new card game for '96 (co-designed by top-notch fantasy artist Brom).

• Bond's back. With the latest James Bond film, *Goldeneye*, due out by the end of the year, Heartbreaker's timely release of the ***James Bond Collectible Card Game*** gives you an early 007 taste in October. Players build a "Bond Mission" and attempt to crack it before their opponents can, using allies, cunning and gadgetry while sabotaging their opponents with villains and seductive women. ■ *Michael Searle*

Michael Searle is the editor of Wizard's sister mag InQuest, *the all-around grooviest guide to collectible card games.*

BETTY BOOP

The Pinup's

CHROMIUM™ Trading Card Set

Betty Boop, America's cartoon sweetheart, is back to make Valentine's Day sweeter than ever! And this time she's bigger than ever as **Krome Productions** presents *Betty Boop: The Pinup's Chromium Trading Card Set.* This 90 card full-color Chromium set contains breath-taking images featuring some of the finest Betty Boop artwork ever produced! As a special bonus, subsets include a 6-card Nostalgia-Chrome chase set and a rare 3-card black & white subset featuring the latest in Chromium technology!

6 cards per pack. 36 packs per box.

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KROME PRODUCTIONS

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GARFIELD

TRADING CARDS

BY JIM DAVIS

He's fat, he's lazy, and he has a grumpy disposition. Still, he's one of the most lovable characters of all time. He's Garfield...the world's funniest feline! And Krome Productions will capture Garfield and his friends in a 90 UV-coated trading card set this January.

Created in 1978 by Jim Davis, Garfield's growth in popularity extends to all fields of publishing and media The famed cat has starred in Emmy award-winning prime-time animated TV specials, and sat atop the New York Times bestseller lists. Davis, himself, has earned Best Cartoonist of the Year awards, as well as the prestigious Reuben award for outstanding strip of the year.

8 UV coated trading cards per pack
36 foil packs per box

BONUS CARDS
9 State-of-the Art Chromium chase cards

BONUS FEATURES
Garfield's Wide World of Sports
Garfield stamps the world
Two-piece puzzle sets

KROME PRODUCTIONS

Coming January 1996
Don't Miss Out!

© 1995 Paws

GOLD AND PLATINUM PLUMMETS

Readers have been asking why the special gold and platinum limited edition books have been dropping in value so much in the price guide lately. (Has that question crossed your mind? We thought so.) Here's what Rich Conley of Heroes and Fantasies in San Antonio, Texas says about the situation: "A combination of too much supply and too little collector demand for the majority of premium books caused confusion in the marketplace. Some publishers even put out special issues that didn't commemorate any significant event. Too much hype, not enough substance—that's what hurt the premium book market. However, we still sell a Platinum *Spider-Man* #1 occasionally."

Rich's comments are pretty typical of the word we've been getting from our crack staff of advisors, that the premium book market is down at the present time. But, hey, that doesn't mean it won't ever come back. Keep your fingers crossed and your mojo working.

FRAZETTA'S ON FIRE

Two titles from Verotik, *Death Dealer* #1 and *Jaguar God* #1, are hotter than the Human Torch's breath, thanks to the gorgeous Frank Frazetta covers. This renewed fan interest in Frazetta's art has spilled over into his earlier works in such titles as *Creepy*, *Eerie* and *Vampirella* by Warren Publications, as well as his early work in titles by EC Publications, such as *Weird Science-Fantasy* #29 and *Shock Suspenstories* #13.

WHAT GOES UP...

...Sometimes comes down. Thanks for all the letters and cards condemning us to a horrible death for dropping the prices on titles like *Harbinger*, *Archer & Armstrong*, *Solar*, *Eternal Warrior* and others published by once-hot Valiant. Why have these been taking such a nose-dive in value lately? Because the craze is simply over, folks. Collectors aren't willing to pay those sky-high prices anymore. In fact, according to our retailer network, collectors aren't willing to pay *any* price for them. "After the recent departure of several of Valiant's major creators, interest appears to be at an all-time low. Hopefully, Acclaim Comics [formerly Valiant] will turn things around," says Will Christensen of Comic Cavalcade in Urbana, Ill., noting Acclaim's post-Birthquake plans to revamp its comic lines again.

On a positive note, most of the "Val"-ues seemed to have bottomed out; there's not many price drops in this month's price guide. So let's all hope the worst is behind us and that something—anything—will get the interest in Valiant headed back in the right direction.

by Jon Warren

THE WORLD'S MVC [MOST VALUABLE COMIC]

Recently, we polled our expert board of Golden Age advisors as to which book they felt holds the claim of being the world's most valuable. No contest: *Action Comics* #1, the first appearance ever of a superhero in comic books (Superman), is now the financial leader, leaving *Detective Comics* #27 (first Batman) behind in the dust. Current market value for *Action* #1? The price guide says $125,000, but that's due to change. Some wacky retailers claim they'd pay over $200,000 for a true Near Mint copy.

"I could sell a hundred of 'em," claims the unusually eager Harry Thomas of Nashville, Tenn. Yeah, right. Wake up and smell the Snapple, Harry. It's just a comic book, man...but, wow, what a comic book.

AUTOGRAPHED COMICS

Yes, autographed comics...a subject which has come up at least a thousand times already. We get tons of mail on it every month. Many of you are probably wondering how much your comic book is worth if the artist signed it at a store event or convention, or as part of a special limited-edition promotion. Unlike autographed sports memorabilia, to date there has been no one established value of a creator's signature on a comic book, and retailers across America have their own various systems for coming up with values for signed comics.

We'll explore this subject more in-depth in the future, but for now, here's a good rule of thumb: If you're more interested in the dollar value of your books than their sentimental value, you should never get a comic signed if it regularly sells for more than $10. This can result in the comic going down in value, as many collectors see this as destroying the comic. There are some exceptions, though: An artist of, say, Todd McFarlane's proportion may up the value of a $10 book like *Spawn* #5 into the neighborhood of $20 or so. A deceased artist's signature on a book valued at less than $10, such as that of Jack Kirby, may fetch around $35. However, most signed books, if you do the math, sell for less than it would cost you to actually travel down to see the artist at a show, pay the admission price and wait on line. Remember, this is our (firm) suggestion; whether you get an expensive book signed is always up to you.

LAST BUT NOT LEAST...

Sometimes, the last issue in a series is the hardest to find, and the most sought after by

Just *try* to find this megascarce *Star Wars* book somewhere in the universe–we dare you.

collectors looking to finish their collections. When an ongoing title is canceled, the last few issues—and especially the final issue—usually have a low print run because of the low demand, making them fairly scarce. Two good examples of this phenomenon are *Vampirella* #113 and *Star Wars* #107. Both are tough to find and easy to sell to collectors who missed them when they were new releases. *Vampirella* #113 is especially tough. This issue was actually published by Harris Comics, and back in 1988 hardly anyone ordered it. So finding a copy these days is not an easy task. Retailers have reported strong demand for the book, with prices as high as $40 in some areas. It moved up to $25 in this month's price guide. Along the same lines, Marvel's *Star Wars* #107 has been a hot issue for quite a while, reaching its current level of $25 a few months back.

ETC.

There has been an unsubstantiated rumor running around that the late Jerry Garcia, leader of the rock group The Grateful Dead, was a big-time comic book collector and has left behind a sizable comic collection. Speculation has retailers scrambling to obtain it (or parts of it), and it is unknown if this would affect the market or not. Garcia's publicist was unavailable for comment at press time.

AND NOW FOR THE RUNDOWN!

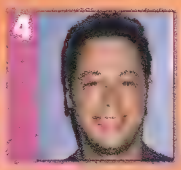
• *Lady Death* (Chaos! Comics). It's true—Bad Girls are *still* hot. Lady Death's first mini-series and *Between Heaven and Hell* mini-series are both great back-issue sellers. Her *Lingerie Special* just started taking off, and her #1/2 velvet and gold versions increased to $55 and $45, respectively.

WIZARD'S TOP TEN HOTTEST ARTISTS

1 — Al Ortega
Todd McFarlane
Spawn

2 — Al Ortega
William Tucci
Shi

3 — Al Ortega
Jim Lee
Gen[13] #6-#7


4 — Al Ortega
Joe Quesada
Ash

5 — Al Ortega
Frank Miller
Sin City: Silent Night

6 — Al Ortega
Adam Kubert
Wolverine

7 — Jim Gund
Adam Hughes
Ghost

8 — Al Ortega
Greg Capullo
Spawn

9 — Al Ortega
Marc Silvestri
Witchblade

10 — Al Ortega
Stephen Platt
Prophet

WIZARD'S TOP TEN HOTTEST WRITERS

1 — Al Ortega
Neil Gaiman
Sandman

2 — Al Ortega
Peter David
Incredible Hulk, Aquaman, Spider-Man 2099

3 — Al Ortega
John Byrne
Wonder Woman

4 — Al Ortega
Frank Miller
Sin City: Silent Night

5 — Bob Martin
Alan Moore
Violator, WildC.A.T.s

6 — Al Ortega
Chris Claremont
Sovereign Seven

7 — Al Ortega
Jeff Smith
Bone

8 — Al Ortega
Dan Jurgens
Superman, upcoming: Sensational Spider-Man

9 — Al Ortega
Jim Lee
Gen[13] #6-#7

10 — J. Schuyler
John Ostrander
The Spectre

WIZARD'S TOP TEN HOTTEST ARTISTS AND WRITERS LISTS ARE DERIVED FROM A NATIONWIDE RETAILER SURVEY.

WIZARD'S UP & COMING CREATOR

ADAM POLLINA

No overnight success, *X-Force*'s new artist arrived at the series after a round of Defiant work, on 1994's *Charlemagne* title. Pollina's unique technique is best demonstrated by his stylized figures (from Siryn to Sabretooth) and inventive action sequences in *X-Force*, which he started with #44. And it's clear that the X-book's intrinsic popularity is only partly responsible for this guy's rising fame: It's the eye-pleasing illustrations he's brought to the title that have been taking him far.

WIZARD'S WINNER AND LOSER OF THE MONTH

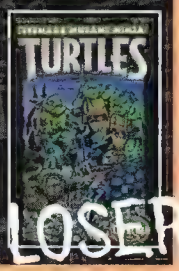
WINNER

Big-time, big-money books

Dealers report *Batman* #1, #16 (first Alfred) and #181 (first Poison Ivy), *Star Wars* (Marvel) and the first DC *Star Trek* series are currently major players.

Has-beens

The interest in books like *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* and the still-plummeting *Ghost Rider* has faded, along with the popularity of their characters. Things can always change, though.



LOSER

MARKET WATCHERS

Letters to the Price Guide

This month, we've got shocked people, book burning, some killing, huge Ticks, walking carrots and more good Halloweenish stuff. We start off with the Bad Babe of horror...

Dear Market Watchers,

I was just wondering—what does it take for a comic series to get listed in a price guide? Popularity? Sales? Length of time on the market? Writers? Artists? I know of a particular series that has been running for more than two years, has both great artwork and great writers (For six issues, it even had Jo Duffy!), and stars a well-known celebrity. Which comic? *Elvira, Mistress of the Dark*, of course! I've wondered about this for a while, and could come to no conclusion. Please tell me: Why isn't it listed?

Marcus Lomeli
San Pedro, CA

Good questions, Marcus! First of all, check out this month's price guide for Claypool Comics' *Elvira*; we've added it!

Secondly, the biggest criteria for getting into the price guide is, without a doubt, popularity. We look at the Top 200 sales info from the various distributors, check with our Wizard Retailer Advisory Board and send out thousands of retailer surveys each month, all in our quest to track the popularity—and resultant market activity—of the world's many comics. Of course, every comic book title can't be listed in the price guide due to space limitations, so we have to include those that we feel, based on our research, are the ones most likely to be important to collectors. You'll notice, too, that the price guide is always adding or dropping titles, depending on the ever-changing marketplace.

Dear Market Watchers,

I've often been confused by how much an autograph boosts a comic's value. I have the *Extreme Super Tour Book*, signed by Danny Miki, Cedric Nocon, Stephen Platt and Karl Altstaetter. I'd also like to know how much *Bucky O'Hare* issues #1-#5 are worth, as well as *The Tick: Karma Tornado* #1.

Thanks!

Ethan Neufeld
Fresno, CA

You're not the only one puzzled about autographed books. Check out this month's Market Watch column for some thoughts on the subject. We get so many letters asking about autographed books that we're seriously considering doing some form of autograph price guide, to help you people out (before a group of you ferociously ransacks our building). As for *Bucky O'Hare* (*Bucky O'Hare???* You have five issues *that?!?*) and *Tick: Karma Tornado*, those books haven't made it past cover price in value, Ethan. And out of the two, I'd say only the Tick has a chance.

Dear Market Watchers,

When I read through the price guide in *Wizard* #49, I was left with some questions:

1) What happened? Why did so many comics (many of which I own) go down in price? Is the comic book industry crashing?

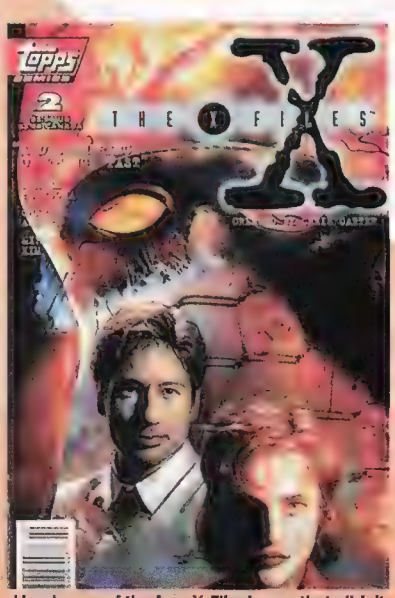
2) I noticed that the values of many comics dropped to below their cover prices. Since this is possible, can the issues keep dropping in price until they are virtually worthless?

3) If the answers to my questions are both "yes," do you think I should take up a new hobby—such as burning my comic books?

Mike Ferrarella
Maspeth, NY

1) Our job is to report the good, the bad and the ugly in the comics market. Some-

• *The X-Files* (Topps Comics). The new season started—hurray! And almost simultaneously (hmmmm...spooky), *X-Files* #1 moved up to $40, #3 to $8 and #4 to $7. (#2 stays at a not-too-shabby $15.) The sci-fi TV show has given Topps its strongest continuous best-seller to date.



Here's one of the few *X-Files* issues that *didn't* go up in value this month!

• *Shi* (Crusade). Bill Tucci's amazing creation continued its non-stop price climb, with #2 moving to $18, and #3 through #5 likewise moving up.

• *X-Men Alpha* (Marvel). The X-Men reign supreme on the best-selling list, in both the new and old areas of the market, and this recent issue (the "Age of Apocalypse" launcher) can't be held back.

• *Gen*[13] (regular series, Image). Jim Lee's top-selling title constantly ranks up there with the likes of the X-Family, and back issues are not easy to find, as they were produced in the "I'm cutting all my comic book orders" phase the industry recently went through.

• *All-American Men of War* (DC). Early issues of this one are hot among DC-watching guys. #1 marched to $560 and #2 to $390, while others followed suit. DC War books continue to remain strong all-around.

• *Preacher* #1 (DC/Vertigo). With activity like #1 moving to $6.50, and #2 to $4.50, this whole series is taking a solid bite out of the market.

• *Amazing Fantasy* #15 (Marvel). The first appearance of Spider-Man moved up to $22,000 this month—seems the revelation that Ben Reilly is the original Spider-Man (instead of the clone) has webbed up new interest in the early Spider-books.

• *Avengelyne* (Maximum Press). Tired of us saying Bad Girl books are hot? Well, tough—here's another scorcher in the BG category. #1 moved up to $6.50 this month.

After only a few issues, Maximum Press' *Avengelyne* is rocking the market.

• *Azrael* (DC). There were several increases for this hot series this month, as Jean Paul approaches his second big year.

• *Batman* (DC). Issue #1 moved up

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to a strong $42,000 this month, while issue #181, the first appearance of Poison Ivy—*another* Bad Babe—sprouted up to $90 (probably due to the fact that she'll be one of the villains in the next Batman film).

• *The Books of Magic* (DC/Vertigo). The Vertigo series featuring the popular Tim Hunter character moved up again this month.

• *Continüm* #1 (Continüm). This first app of Dawn, by Joseph Michael Linsner, increased a whopping $20 this month to $80.

• *Cynder* (Entity Comics). This beautiful newcomer to the price guide brings with her some heat. Issue #1 debuts at $4 this month.

• *Cry for Dawn* (Cry for Dawn Productions). #1 moved to $150, with retailers reporting strong demand.

• *Death Dealer* #1 (Verotik). Another newcomer to this month's price guide, this one debuts at $8 and is HOT!

• *Jaguar God* (Verotik). The other hot new entrant from Verotik, #1 enters the fray at $5.

• *Razor* (London Night Studios). Hot and scarce, issue #2 of this hard-hitting title jumps to $18, #2A (limited edition) to $28, #3 to $15 and #4 to $10. Strong demand!

• *Star Wars* (Marvel). The original Marvel series is super-hot—prices moved up across the board.

It looks like Paul Pope's *THB* should stand for "The Hot Book."

• *THB* (Horse Press). #1 of this successful and surreal series moved to $10, and #2 through #5 also moved up. An important note before you go trick-or-treating: Keep watching those small press books, 'cause more and more people already are! **W**

Jon Warren loves to talk comics on the Internet. Send e-mail (and e-cash) to: JonRWarren@aol.com

times, collectors lose interest in a series for any number of reasons, and those comics then go down in value. That does not mean the entire comics industry is collapsing.

2) Comics often sell for below cover price; just look through any comic shop's quarter box for proof of this. Go to a convention, and you'll find people selling boxloads of comics for 25 cents or less. Why do they sell for less than cover price? Because no one *wants* them at cover price, and to get rid of them retailers must lower the prices until someone will buy them.

3) Don't burn your comics; it's not good for the environment. The old adage that you should buy what you enjoy is really the truth. If you love your comics and the excitement of reading them, then who cares what they sell for? If your one and only motivation is to see how much they go up in value, then you're in the hobby for the wrong reasons.

Dear Market Watchers,

I'm very confused, mad and shocked. And I'll tell you why. It all started in issue #47 while I was looking through the *Wizard* Price Guide. I wanted to find out whether my two Gold copies of *Youngblood* #0 had gone up. To my surprise, they hadn't gone up (as usual)—but had gone *down* in price. They went from $65 to a very low $25. At that time, I said to myself, "The price is probably going to go up again," but it didn't. One month later, I went to see if it had gone up to its normal price in issue #48. As you know, it went down again, to $15. Can you tell me what's wrong?

David Wee
La Habra, CA

I'd be fairly pissed, too, David. Don't kill the messenger, though—we're just reporting the facts. Retailers are telling us they can't sell premium books at those high prices anymore; they have to sell them cheap to get rid of them. Check out the section at the beginning of this issue's Market Watch for more about gold and platinum books, and to hear about one retailer's standpoint.

Dear Market Watchers,

I was hoping that you could help me with some prices:

1) *Marvel Movie Showcase Featuring Star Wars*, Vol. 1, #1, published in November of '82. It's 64 pages, and is penciled by Howard Chaykin.

2) I've been trying to find *Verotika* #1 and *Satanika* #1, published by Verotik. The store owners in my area who have them are charging $20 each, which is way over cover price. To help me figure out if this price is fair, could you please put them in your magazine?

3) *Comico Primer* #5 contains the first Maxx appearance. Shouldn't it be worth a ton of money?

4) Lastly, someone told me that first appearance of Flaming Carrot was in a comic called *Visions*. Is this true? If so, how much is it worth? I've gotta know!

William M. Lee
Burlington, WI

OK, William, here goes:

1) *Marvel Movie Showcase* #1 and #2 reprint the original *Star Wars* #1-#6 from Marvel. Worth about $2 each, 'cause they're reprints.

2) *Verotika* and *Satanika* are listed in this month's price guide—what service, huh?

3) Check out this issue's guide for the latest price of the consistently rising *Primer* #5, which introduced the original version of the popular Image character—it's been at an impressive $20 since last month. Looks like the latest run of *Primer* has another collectible debut coming up, by the way: the assassin Lady Bathory in November's #1 issue.

4) That someone's absolutely right—our *Visions* #1 listing will give you the scoop on the first appearance of the "Ut!"-yellin', flipper-wearin' freak. I'll tell you now: It's worth more than you might think!

Hope this helps, William.

That's all this time, fellow Market Watchers; gotta go get ready for Halloween, drink some replenishing blood, sharpen my fangs, that kind of stuff. Tune in next month, when we'll tackle more interesting toughies like the ones you just read.

—Jon Warren
Head Price Guide Goblin

HEY, if you're dying to ask a smart (or stupid) question, go ahead! Send 'em to:

MARKET WATCHERS
c/o Jon Warren
P.O. Box 2512
Chattanooga, TN 37409
Or send e-mail directly to the head guru himself:
JonRWarren@aol.com

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TOP 100

The highest-ordered comic books for the month of OCTOBER.

Compiled by the *Wizard* Price Guide staff, and working off the data supplied by comic book retailers across the country, the following is a listing of the highest-ordered comics for October. Check out the column on the right for an explanation of this month's rankings.

1. **Uncanny X-Men #327 (Marvel)**
2. Spawn #37 (Image)
3. Wolverine #96 (Marvel)
4. Gen[13] #6 (Image)
5. X-Men #47 (Marvel)
6. Generation X #10 (Marvel)
7. X-Force #49 (Marvel)
8. X-Man #10 (Marvel)
9. Wolverine/Gambit: Victims #4 (Marvel)
10. X-Factor #117 (Marvel)
11. Amazing Scarlet Spider #2 (Marvel)
12. Cable #26 (Marvel)
13. Scarlet Spider #2 (Marvel)
14. Spectacular Scarlet Spider #2 (Marvel)
15. Web of Scarlet Spider #2 (Marvel)
16. Professor Xavier and the X-Men #2 (Marvel)
17. Excalibur #92 (Marvel)
18. X-Men Unlimited #9 (Marvel)
19. Ghost #7 (Dark Horse)
20. Shi: Senryaku #2 (Crusade)
21. Grifter/Badrock #1 (Image)
22. Cable and X-Force '95 (Marvel)
23. WildC.A.T.s #24 (Image)
24. Witchblade #1 (Image)
25. The X-Files #10 (Topps)
26. The X-Files #11 (Topps)
27. Superman #107 (DC)
28. Action Comics #716 (DC)
29. Spider-Man Team-Up #1 (Marvel)
30. Superman: The Man of Steel #51 (DC)
31. Wonder Woman #104 (DC)
32. Batman #525 (DC)
33. Untold Tales of Spider-Man #4 (Marvel)
34. Adventures of Superman #530 (DC)
35. Star Wars: Empire's End #1 (Dark Horse)
36. Superman: The Man of Tomorrow #3 (DC)
37. Incredible Hulk #436 (Marvel)
38. Star Wars: Heir to the Empire #1 (Dark Horse)
39. Evil Ernie: Straight to Hell #1 (Chaos!)
40. Avengelyne: Power #1 (Maximum Press)
41. Ripclaw #1 (Image)
42. Green Goblin #3 (Marvel)
43. Sandman #73 (DC)
44. Cyberforce #17 (Image)
45. Spider-Man: The Final Adventure #1 (Marvel)
46. Venom: Sinner Take All #5 (Marvel)
47. Grifter #6 (Image)
48. The Maxx #20 (Image)
49. Detective Comics #692 (DC)
50. Green Lantern #69 (DC)
51. Glory #7 (Image)
52. Vogue #1 (Image)
53. Star Wars: X-Wing . . .#4 (Dark Horse)
54. Deathblow #21 (Image)
55. Sovereign Seven #6 (DC)
56. Batman: Shadow of the Bat #45 (DC)
57. StormWatch #29 (Image)
58. Vampirella Strikes #1 (Harris)
59. Godzilla #5 (Dark Horse)
60. The All New Exiles #1 (Malibu)
61. Azrael #11 (DC)
62. Zealot #3 (Image)
63. Riptide #2 (Image)
64. Underworld Unleashed #3 (DC)
65. Batman: Legends. . .Dark Knight #78 (DC)
66. Star Wars: T. of the Jedi—S. War #3 (D. Horse)
67. Fantastic Four #407 (Marvel)
68. Batman: Man-Bat #3 (DC)
69. Nightwing #4 (DC)
70. Weapon Zero #0 (Image)
71. Avengers #393 (Marvel)
72. Velocity #2 (Image)
73. Underworld Unleashed—Devil's Asylum #1 (DC)
74. Amazing Fantasy #16 (Marvel)
75. Superboy #22 (DC)
76. X-Men 2099 #27 (Marvel)
77. Batman: Ghosts. . .D. K. Halloween Special (DC)
78. Catwoman #27 (DC)
79. Chaos! Bible (Chaos!)
80. Doomsday Annual #1 (DC)
81. Vengeance of Vampirella #19 (Harris)
82. Captain America #446 (Marvel)
83. Robin #23 (DC)
84. Batman: The Ultimate Evil #1 (DC)
85. Aquaman #15 (DC)
86. Youngblood #2 (Image)
87. Bone #21 (Image)
88. Flash #108 (DC)
89. Underworld Unleashed #2 (DC)
90. Sovereign Seven Annual #1 (DC)
91. Astro City #3 (Image)
92. WildStorm! #3 (Image)
93. Punisher #2 (Marvel)
94. Starjammers #3 (Marvel)
95. Avengers Unplugged #2 (Marvel)
96. Underworld Unleashed: Patterns of Fear #1 (DC)
97. Daredevil #347 (Marvel)
98. Star Trek: Deep Space Nine #29 (Malibu)
99. Ash #6 (Event)
100. Underworld Unleashed: Abyss—H. S. (DC)

AT THE TOP:

The X-Men once again dominate the chart. A couple of changes this month, though: While Magneto's fate kept *Uncanny X-Men* at #1, *X-Men* dropped from #2 to #5, possibly thanks to its less-than-eventful X-Babies return story. However, books like *X-Factor*, *X-Force* and *Excalibur* are steadily climbing the chart these days, as people have noticed that Marvel (which took a whopping 16 spots in the Top 20) is pouring some quality into these titles.

NEAR THE TOP:

As the epic nature of the Scarlet Spider books kept them ranked high this month, the powerful quality of *Ghost* made it October's hottest Bad Girl title, with the multi-artist *Shi: Senryaku* book and Image's new babe *Witchblade* right behind it.

NEAR THE MIDDLE:

While *X-Files*' one-time biweekly format in October did double the usual good for Topps, DC didn't perform too well sales-wise, as *Superman* was its top-selling title this month at #27. The success of Dark Horse's *Star Wars* books—the two *Empire* books hit a high #35 and #38—proves the fanaticism over The Force hasn't died.

IN THE MIDDLE:

Several Image books jumped up the chart this month, including *The Maxx* (thanks to the MTV cartoon), *Cyberforce* (perhaps gaining new fans after the Cyblade/Shi crossover) and *Glory* (up a huge 25 places from September). Glory's recent crossover with Maximum Press' Avengelyne brought the latter heroine to a solid #40.

IN THE SECOND HALF:

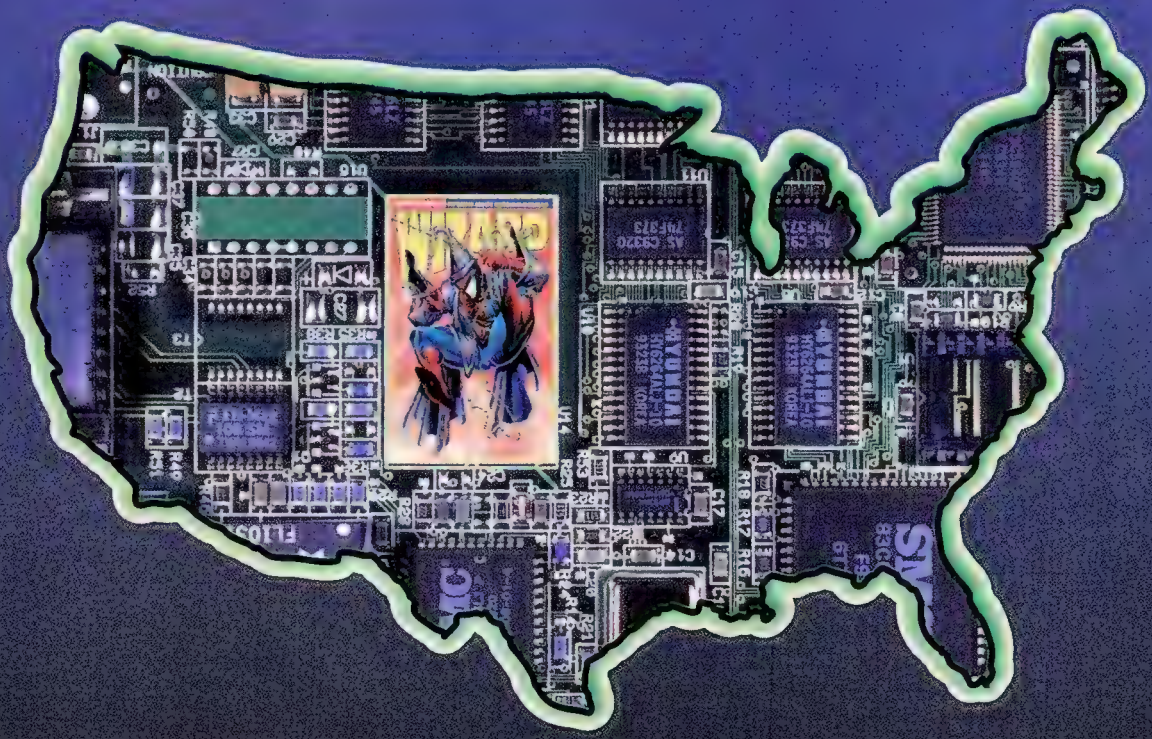
One might've thought it has always been there, but *Bone* hit the Top 100 for the first time charting at #87, probably due to the new Image "i" in the corner box. Vampi's new Harris series *Vampirella Strikes* broke through the charts at a solid #58. Malibu's mutant book *The Exiles* scored pretty well, placing at #60, perhaps because of its low $1.50 cover price. For some mysterious reason, sales on DC's *Underworld Unleashed* #3 excelled those of #2. *Captain America* is enjoying renewed interest, due to the new writer and artist team of Mark Waid and Ron Garney.

ATTENTION COMIC BOOK RETAILERS:

If you're a retailer who would like to participate in our compiling of the Top 100 (and be a candidate for special prizes), please write to us at the address below.

Top 100 Coordinator
c/o Wizard Press
151 Wells Ave.
Congers, NY 10920-2064
or e-mail us at: WizardTGTC@aol.com

Wire Into Wizard



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Bad Girls of WIZARD®

WANTED

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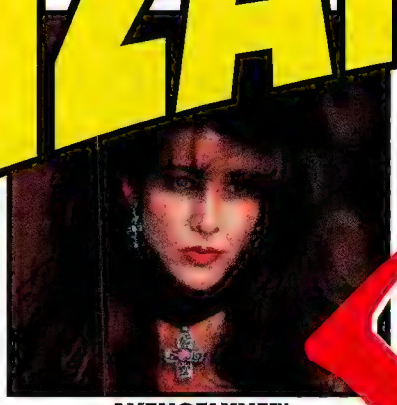
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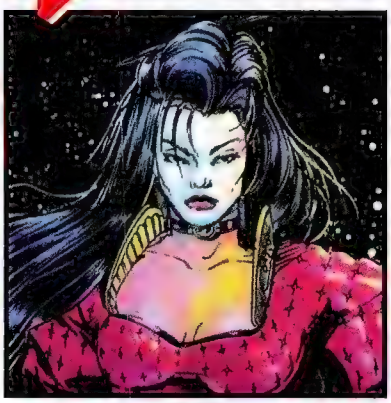
RAZOR™

DAWN™

LADY DEATH™

BARB WIRE™

ANGELA™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REWARD:

The hottest **Wizard Special** ever, including a Lady Death/Shi/Vampirella jam poster and a preview of Pamela Anderson's *Barb Wire* movie. On sale in December.

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survey: issue 52

QUESTIONS, COMMENTS & CONCERNS

We want to know what you like about this li'l mag of ours. Tell us what you thought about this particular issue of *WIZARD*, what you liked best, and what sucked sour frog ass. (Use extra paper if you're one of them long-winded types.)

_____

_____

_____

_____

PRICE CHANGES

Are books selling in your area for a lot more or a lot less than *WIZARD* is listing them at? If they are, we wanna know. List any major discrepancies you feel exist in the *WIZARD* price guide. (Use extra paper if necessary.)

Title	Issue #	What it sells for in your area

TOP TEN HOTTEST COMICS

What do you see as the hottest comics among the circle of friends you hang out with? List them below, with the hottest book at the number one slot.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

TOP TEN HOTTEST ARTISTS

Who is your favorite comic book artist? Actually, we wanna know who your top 10 favorite artists are. List your favorite artist in the number one slot, followed by your second favorite artist, etc.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

TOP TEN HOTTEST WRITERS

Hang in there; we're almost done. What we need now is the list of your 10 favorite comic book writers. You know the drill: your favorite in pole position, with your second favorite at number two, yadda, yadda, yadda.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

let your voice be heard

WE WANT TO KNOW WHAT YOU THINK

We need your help. Y'see, the only way to keep improving the WIZARD price guide is to keep in touch with the thousands of comic book fans that make this industry what it is. So, we need you to take a couple of minutes and fill out the survey on the left and mail this page to us. And heck, by helping us make a better mag, you'll *get* a better mag! (See? It all works out in the end.) Oh, and feel free to photocopy this page if you don't feel like destroying this issue.

WHO ARE YOU?

_____
Name (please print)

_____
Address

_____
City State

_____
Zip Age

_____
e-mail address (if you got one)

MAIL SURVEY TO:

Jon R. Warren
c/o WIZARD P.G. Surveys
2401 Broad St.
Chattanooga, TN 37408
e-mail: JonRWarren@aol.com

E.G.O.*

BY TODD McFARLANE

Mixed Media

As I'm sure most of you have seen over the course of the past five to 10 years, whenever there's a successful comic-related movie, the media tends to jump on the bandwagon. All of a sudden, comic books are OK in the media's estimation, and therefore it begins to shed a bright light on the subject. But in between each movie, the media seems to take more of a dim, if not almost moronic, view of comics and the comics community.

As an example, I recently did a taping for the TV show "A Current Affair" in which the show tried to make me look like a sadistic racist. Given that the media has the power to edit out all the information that doesn't fit into its story, this is a perfect example.

The "Current Affair" story dealt with a lady who found *Spawn* #30 offensive because it featured a hanged man on the cover and the story dealt with the Ku Klux Klan terrorizing a black family. What I find most offensive is that the media seems to not do its homework. It seemed to overlook the fact that Spawn is a black man with a black family. There was a broader picture that was ignored.

I'm sure most of you have seen a newspaper article on comic books and I'd bet my life that 90 percent of the time it used "Bam," "Pow" or "Boom" in the title, taking bad sound effects from the '60s "Batman" TV show. If the media keeps presenting comic books like that, it perpetuates that myth that comics are just read by dumb kids. Adults who stopped reading comics 25 years ago have no idea how much comics have matured.

Like a video store, comic stores have a variety of comics with different subject matters. When you're a kid, you want to watch *Dumbo*, when you're 12 you watch action movies, and when you're 30 you want to watch adult-themed dramas. It's just like that nowadays with comics. There's something for everyone. But it seems no one in the media has gone out of his or her way to make people aware of it.

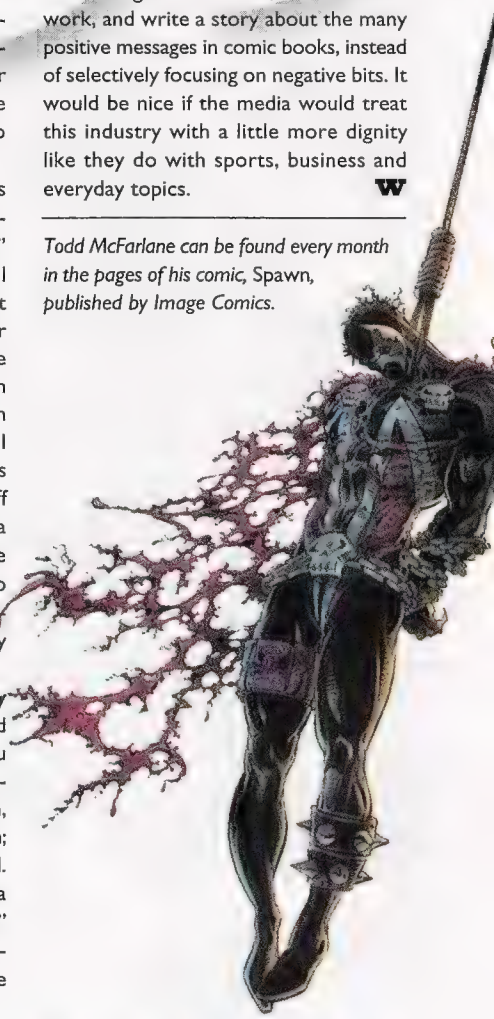
The other subject the media seems to harp on, quite ridiculously, is the content of violence. In the "Current Affair" spot, the show selectively eliminated all the good pictures and went straight towards the violent ones. The six or seven examples presented were the worst examples I've ever drawn in *Spawn*, even though I've probably drawn over 4,000 panels. One of the points I tried to make, and was edited out, was that I believe kids absorb the good stuff *and* the bad in comics, much like a sponge will absorb liquid at the same rate. What the show didn't care to report on was that any given comic normally has 95 percent good stuff and very few bad things.

And the bad things aren't necessarily wrong to show. After all, how can a kid discriminate what is good and bad if you don't show both? When a kid sees basketball pro Charles Barkley spit on a fan, it doesn't mean he's going to emulate him; he'll simply remember that that's stupid.

It just drives me crazy that the media only focuses on how only the "bad" things in comics are absorbed into children's minds and causes "destructive behavior." If I put people holding hands and saying, "Peace" for 12 issues of *Spawn*, I don't think there'd be any more peace in the world, either.

I wish the media would take more of a middle-ground stance, do its homework, and write a story about the many positive messages in comic books, instead of selectively focusing on negative bits. It would be nice if the media would treat this industry with a little more dignity like they do with sports, business and everyday topics. **W**

Todd McFarlane can be found every month in the pages of his comic, Spawn, *published by Image Comics.*



*EVERYONE'S GOT OPINIONS

The opinions expressed in this column are not necessarily those of *Wizard: The Guide to Comics*, its editorial staff or Image Comics.

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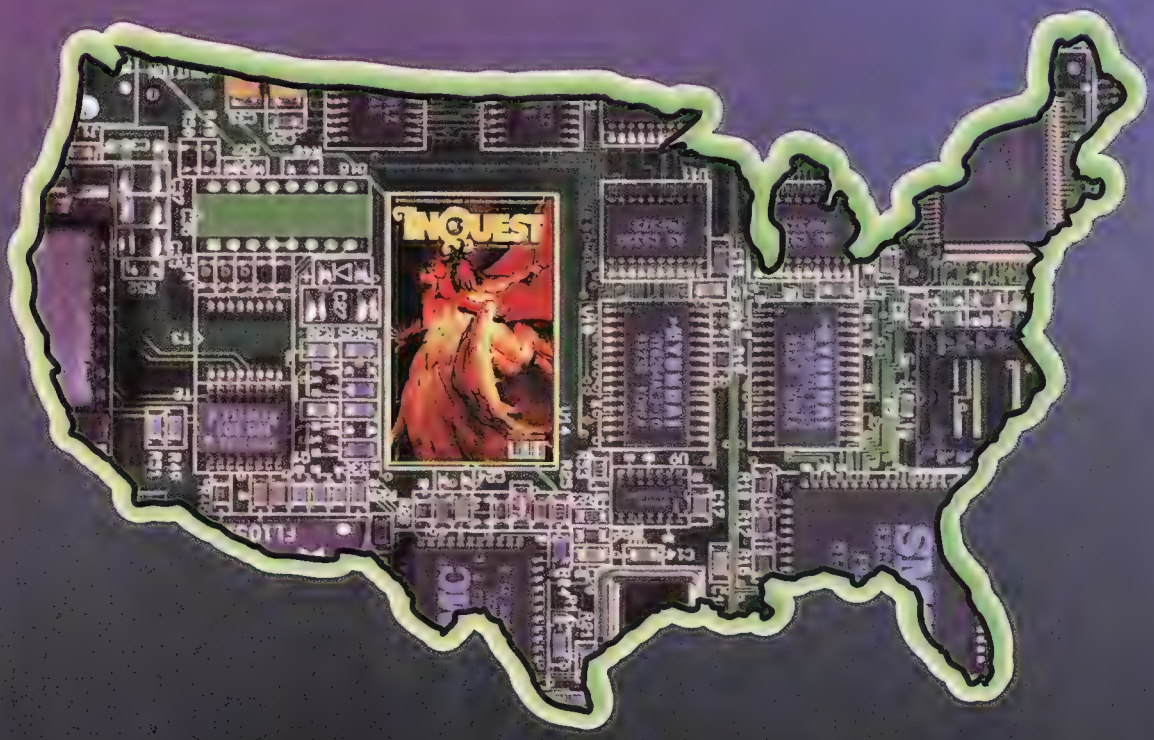

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JUNK DRAWER

Little bits of everything that we couldn't stretch into a full-page newsy thing

IMAGINATIVE SCREEN SAVERS

So you want to give your computer a new image? Well try these on for size. Start with a host of screen savers from Think Multimedia Entertainment including Gen[13], WildC.A.T.s, Youngblood and a sample of Erik Larsen's work.

Here's the deal on some of your favorite Image Comics' characters:

• The Gen[13] Comic Book Screen Saver features 50 of the most memorable Gen[13] drawings in color.

• The WildC.A.T.s Comic Book Screen Saver from WildStorm Productions features Spartan, Warblade, Maul, Zealot, Jacob Marlowe and others.

• The Youngblood Comic Book Screen Saver from Extreme Studios features Shaft, Badrock, Chapel, Diehard, Vogue, Prophet, Supreme, Troll and others.

• Erik Larsen's Comic Screen Savers features 50 of the hottest drawings from his Image creations, including work on *The Savage Dragon*, *SuperPatriot*, *Vanguard*, *Freak Force* and more.

All screen savers are compatible with both PC and Macintosh computers. System requirements include: for PCs, a minimum of 4 MB RAM and Microsoft Windows 3.1 (the screen savers are compatible with Windows '95), and for Macs, a minimum of 6 MB RAM. Suggested retail price for all screen savers is $19.95. To order by phone, call 1 (800) 865-8869.

In addition, Think Multimedia Entertainment introduces The Erik Larsen CD-ROM Comic Book Anthology Volume One. The CD-ROM includes complete and uncut versions of *The Savage Dragon* (mini-series #1-#3, ongoing series #1-#10), *Super Patriot* #1-#6, *Vanguard* #1-#6, *Freak Force* #1-#4 and more. The anthology features the exclusive, never-before-printed, first-ever appearance of *The Savage Dragon* in a 1982 self-published book by Larsen.

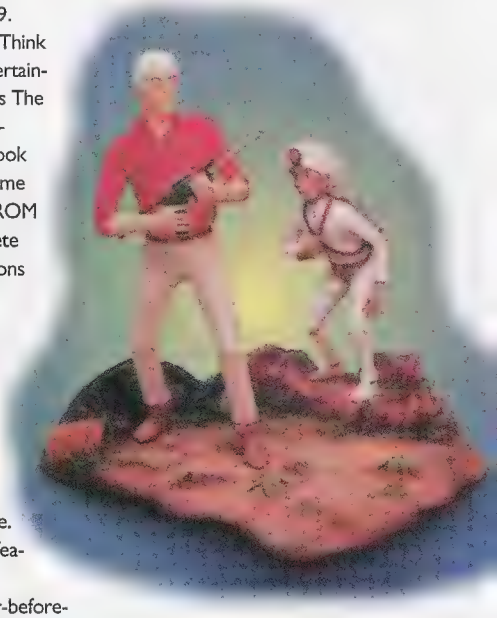
Bonuses include original drawings, layouts and characters designs from Larsen's private sketchbook.

The Erik Larsen CD-ROM Comic Book Anthology carries a suggested retail price of $29.95.

Future plans for the company include current discussions with Marc Silvestri (*Cyberforce*) and Todd McFarlane (*Spawn*) for screensavers or CD-ROM anthologies.

WHERE THE HECK'S JONNY?

November sees the release of the Race Bannon and Haji cold-cast statue kits. Thanks to Graphitti Designs and The Shape of Things, you can continue the excitement of the Jonny Quest adventure. Haji measures some seven inches tall and Race stands a towering 10 inches in height. Both statues are available only as cold-cast kits and need to be painted and assembled. (Uh-oh, better get out the smocks!) The neatest part, though, is that these two kits connect with the Jonny and



Dr. Quest kit to make the neatest Jonny Quest diorama ever! (Gosh, the last time we even *attempted* to make a diorama, all we used was some gray clay and a dusty ol' shoe box...) Haji and Race Bannon retail for $95 each.

In other Jonny Quest news, Turner Home Entertainment has granted Lewis Galoob Toys, Inc. the worldwide master toy license for the new animated TV series, "The Real Adventures of Jonny Quest."

The toy line will feature action figures, role-playing toys and plush toys. Turner Broadcasting will unveil its remake of the Hanna-Barbera classic animated TV series in fall of 1996 with the show scheduled to air 21 times a week on Turner, TNT and The Cartoon Network.

WILDSTORM GOES GAMEY

Jim Lee's wacky WildC.A.T.s finally make it to the video game screen this November in *WildC.A.T.s Covert-Action-Teams*. The

game, available for the Super Nintendo system and retailing for $69.99, lets players assume the role of one of three WildC.A.T.s members: team leader Spartan, warrior Maul or hand-to-hand combat expert Warblade. Through 11 levels of play, players must stop the evil Daemonites from invading the Earth, capturing a powerful Orb and wreaking a whole lot o' havoc across the cosmos.

BERRY BERRY OVERPOWER

You may soon find yourself enjoying breakfast with your favorite Marvel heroes as General Mills and Marvel Comics have joined together for a unique promotion. From September through December, specially marked boxes of Berry Berry Kix (Hey, it's kid tested and mother approved!) will come packed with three *OverPower* game cards. There will also be a mail-in offer for an *OverPower* starter deck on the box's side panel. Helping to promote this offer will be those popu-

more

models, inc.

So you like to build models?

How about a selection of licensed cold-cast resin model kits based on Japanese animation? Streamline Pictures Modelworks, which entered the world of licensed model kits with the limited-edition Speed Racer kit in the spring of '95, returns with The Masters of Japanese Animation licensed model kits. All are designed for advanced model builders.

Currently available are:

• Four pieces from *Robot Carnival*, the animated feature film frequently seen on TBS and the Sci-Fi Channel.

They include: Nakamura's "Nightmare," which has a suggested retail price of $99.95; Otomo's "Dancing Robots" and Umetsu's "Fantasy Girl," which both retail for $79.95; and Kitazume's "Starlight Angel," which sports an introductory price of $99.95, but will jump to $129.95 after Jan. 1.

• Guy, based on the horror series, with a suggested retail price of $99.95.

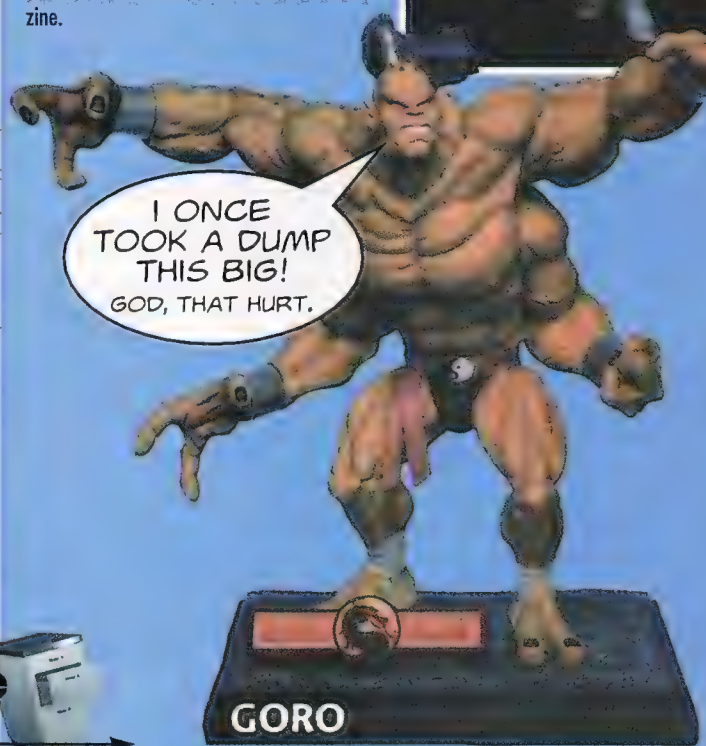
• Wicked City, based on the sci-fi animated series, which does not yet have a suggested retail price.

• Streamline has also obtained the rights to a series of kits based on the video game *Mortal Kombat*. The first of the kits, Goro, has a price tag of $89.95.

For more information on Streamline Pictures Modelworks or to order, call (310) 998-0070. When you call, make sure to tell 'em *Wizard* sent you.

Other planned licensed products include model kits on the upcoming anime feature *Ghost in the Shell*, works from science fiction and fantasy artists Michael Kaluta and Howard Chaykin, and a series of kits based on art from the pages of *Heavy Metal* magazine.

FANTASY GIRL



lar mutants, The X-Men, who will be prominently displayed on the outside of the Berry Berry Kix box. Hmm…what's next, Northstar on the cover of Fruit Loops?

MADMAN IS RIGHT ON THE MARK

Mike Allred's Madman is jumping onto the T-shirt scene once again, courtesy of Graphitti Designs. This time he's in a bit of a pickle, as he attempts to dodge a handful of arrows in front of a rather large bullseye. So show your support for the snappiest superhero around (or even archery for that matter) by picking up the Madman "Bullseye" T-Shirt. This swell shirt ships in November for $16.95.

A MONSTROUS RETURN

Look under your beds. Check the closets. Peek at the back of the fridge. But have no fear, kiddies, 'cause Mr. Monster's here and he'll take care o' any nasty li'l critters for ya. For years, the Stearn family has kept the Mr. Monster tradition alive, until the 1940s that is. Jim Stearn carried on the dynasty until he did the unmentionable…he quit. (And just wait till you see what happened next!) It's all there for you to read in the *Mr. Monster: Origins* trade paperback available in December from Graphitti Designs. This 208-page trade paperback by Michael T. Gilbert, which runs for $19.95, collects the entire eight-issue run from Dark Horse comics. So fight those Halloween shivers with a monster of a good book (groan)!

RETURN OF THE PRINTS

Capture the essence of *Star Wars* in the all-new Star Wars Video Game Key Art ChromArt prints.

Capitalizing on the video release of *Star Wars*, *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of Jedi*, Zanart Entertainment is using the key art from the video boxes to produce ChromArt prints, which use a foiling and etching process to give a 3-D effect on a two-dimensional surface. The prints are approximately 8x10 inch images, matted to 11x14 inches, and are available matted, with hand-cut black marble mats, and shrinkwrapped, or matted and framed.

Five new Star Wars prints featuring key art from the Star Wars video games are also available. Images include Dark Forces, Rebel Assault, TIE Fighter, X Wing and TIE Fighter-Defender of the Empire.

Suggested retail price for ChromArt matted prints is $12, and $20 for matted and framed ChromArt prints.

Zanart also produce ChromArt and lithographic prints for *Star Trek*, *Batman Forever*, *Superman*, *Mighty Morphin Power Rangers*, *Species*, *Looney Tunes* and *Animaniacs*.

THE FETT IS COMING!!!

Kenner's new line of Star Wars toys—which are incredibly awesome, though incredibly hard to find—will finally be including our favorite bounty hunter Boba Fett! December sees the release of Mr. Fett complete with battle damage armor, removable jetpack, sculpted cape (grrr…) and signature blasters. In addition, there will also be a Luke Skywalker in X Wing Pilot Gear (so detailed he even has neato Rebel insignias) with lightsaber and blaster, and a Lando Calrissian figure in his "Cloud City" uniform with a sculpted cape (grrr again) and two blasters.

And just around the corner in February, you can expect to see Han Solo in Hoth Gear with his blaster and a large blaster rifle (unfortunately there's no split-open Tauntaun to stick Han in during those really severe cold spells); Luke Skywalker in Dagobah Fatigues with lightsaber and blaster; TIE Fighter Pilot with two blasters; and that cute li'l Grover-related guy Yoda who's equipped with staff, and a backpack that you can actually put on Luke to help carry the Jedi Master.

February also sees the release of two more truly cool things. First off is the Speeder Bike with Scout Trooper Figure that includes an awesome blow-apart feature. After you've broken that toy from days of massive abuse, check out the real-size Luke Skywalker's Lightsaber. You can flick the blade out of the handle with just a twist of yer wrist, and activate some realistic lights and three digitally lifted sounds from the movie: a power-up, a "running" sound and a battle-crash that emits whenever the saber is abruptly stopped or makes contact with something. The Force is truly coming home!

ROBIN'S NEW LOOK

Robin's getting a new look.

Hasbro's Transforming Dick Grayson action figure from its Batman Forever toy line, that is.

When the figure was first released, his cape was solid black. In the film *Batman Forever*, Robin's cape has two-sided color, black and bronze. Hasbro was unable to duplicate this two-sided look so the company did the next best thing. Hence, the new version of the Transforming Dick Grayson will sport a bronze cape this fall.

Exact numbers of the amount of Robin figures released with black capes were unavailable. W

SAVE

Half-a-Buck on the Wizard Annual!

ON SALE THE LAST WEEK OF OCTOBER

THE WIZARD ANNUAL is the authoritative price guide for comic books. Get it for 50¢ off the cover price. Just clip out the coupon below and redeem it at your local comic book store.

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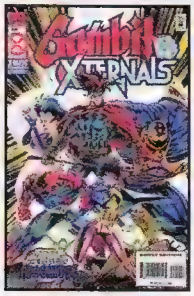
bullpen

JUST DEE IT!

Andrew Kardon. *Wizard* Copy Editor. Twisted Sister fan. Obsessive name-dropper. But we're glad. Y'see, Kardon here takes every opportunity to slip Dee Snider's name into *Wizard* (Dee's Twisted's ex-lead singer, and the current lead singer of Widowmaker), and it's paid off twice. First, Dee, along with his sons Jesse and Shane, swung by our offices and hung out, and then the esteemed Mr. Snider invited a bunch of us to a concert in Tuxedo, Conn., to watch him and one of his bands, SMF (which stands for…uh, ummm…stuff), rock the house apart. Led by the always-moist Andrew Kardon, *Wizard* staffers Mike Fasolo, Arlene So, Pat McCallum and Marc Wilkofsky headed north and moshed to the tunes of "The Price," "I Am (i'm Me)," "We're Not Gonna Take It" and other memorable goodies. The evening's highlights included Marc's inadvertent slam-dancing, the shirtless guy who had body-pierced himself to the point where he was wearing chain mail and the 300-pound chick dressed in skintight pants and a tube top. Yum. Thanks for the invite, Dee!

WHAT SCARES YOU THE MOST?

Jim McLauchlin, Promotions & Publicity Manager: "Chicks that can beat me up."
Brian Cunningham, Editor: "The 'It's a Small World' ride at Disney World—it does not end!!"
Bob Marshall, Price Guide Editor: "Republicans."
Robin Ramos, Designer: "Buying a hot dog from a street vendor who's smiling way too much."
Marc Wilkofsky, Contributing Editor: "Huge bugs and Pauly Shore movies."
Andrew Kardon, Copy Editor: "Working next to Marc Wilkofsky."
Scott Gramling, Managing Editor: "*Wizard* Card Price Guide Editor Dan Albaugh in a ballerina outfit."
Kathy Newman, Promotions & Publicity Coordinator: "The guys at *Wizard* scare me to death."



WHAT ANNOYED US THIS MONTH

Nothing's happening on comic book covers anymore! We always thought the reason for covers was to show what's going on inside the issue, or at least toss us some action, instead of a pin-up (*Spawn*) or a team shot (any freakin' X-book). You can easily tell a comic has a real story inside if there's more than just a hero posing on the cover, and there's a word balloon or two (another highly rare instance on today's covers). C'mon, comic publishers—getcher artists and writers to work together and produce some kickin' covers.

STUFF THAT GOT US THROUGH THIS ISSUE

The football season (Go, Broncos!), Mark Waid and Ron Garney's better-than-ever second *Captain America* issue (#445), Cajun Jerky "fake meat," the returns of "The Simpsons," "ER," "Friends" and "Melrose Place," the end (?) of the O.J. trial, The Cranberries' *No Need to Argue* and Live's *Mental Jewelry* albums, and original flicks like *Seven* and *The Usual Suspects*!

Left to right: The Cranberries' *No Need to Argue*, *Captain America* and Live's *Mental Jewelry*.

GET ONLINE WITH WIZARD!

Here's two special guests coming to Wizard World, America Online's forum for *Wizard* readers! Keyword WIZARD to reach the forum, or call (800) 754-4400 to sign onto AOL. Both events take place in the Wizard Chat Room from 6:30 to 7:15 pm EST.

November 8: Shi creator, artist and writer **William Tucci** will talk about the popular heroine and upcoming releases from Crusade Entertainment.

November 21: Celebrated sculptor **Randy Bowen** will meet his fans. Bowen's most recent work was the Hunter Rose/Grendel statue.

CHECK LIST

InQuest #8

We start with an amazing cover by fa[illegible] **Keith Parkinson** as well as an interv[illegible] breathtaking work on *Guardians* and [illegible] We also present an engaging history of [illegible] — the different myths and legends [illegible] right up to White Wolf's megacopolis [illegible] game—and we preview the *Middle-earth: The Wizards* game from ICE, based on J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*! This issue also answers [illegible] the most frequently asked *Magic* questions, and introduces an exciting *Magic* game variant based on *Fallen Empires*! You can also win cards from Heartbreaker's new *The Crow* game and packs from every *Magic* expansion set! And we're throwing in a free *On the Edge* card from Atlas, and an awesome looking *Guardians* card from FPG! $3.99

CONTEST WINNERS

These are the groovy winners to several past *Wizard* contests. C[illegible]

MALIBU TALENT SEARCH
(way back in issue #41)
Writer Allen Co[illegible] of Brooklyn, penciler Chris Cosgriff of [illegible], Fla., and inker Danny DeAngelo of [illegible] will be working on an upcoming Malibu project. Look for it

JUDGE DREDD #47
Scoring a super [illegible] video game system and a *Judge Dredd* game from Acclaim, [illegible] sheet of Judge Dredd movie cards from Edge Entertainment signed by Sly Stallone and a whole slew of other Dredd prizes, Jumbo [illegible] Banana of Daly City, Calif. [illegible] for the name alone. But he got the [illegible] Brain Bordland (as well as several other artists). Mega-City One and yes—[illegible] and was randomly picked!

BARTMAN #47
Debra Jean Hopkins of [illegible], Calif. sent in the best Top Ten Excuses List for Bart to skip out of class (and save the world as Bartman), and is rewarded with a genuine animation cel from the "Simpsons" TV series!

MISSING LINK #47
Fidel Arbolaez [illegible] Lakeland, Fla. YOU fig[illegible] out that Acme Comics #692, Hardcase #19 and X-Men Classics #2 all featured one character taking the guise of another. So you win a spiffy X-Men (vol. 1) #58—take a bow, guy!

next month

TOP TEN

Top ten most frightening things found in the Wizard Press bathroom:

10. Dung beetles the size of your fist.
9. The intoxicated midgets huddled in the corner chanting, "Shoot the boot! Shoot the boot!"
8. The bloated, half-eaten corpse of the Toilet Duck.
7. Man-Thing (and you'd be surprised at what burns at his touch).
6. Lorena Bobbitt in the drop-ceiling playing "Helmet or Anteater."
5. The Tidy-Bowl Man's crushed, lifeless body broken and sprawled out on the floor.
4. Ornery toilet-shark.
3. The wet pile of human cartilage and hair at the base of the man-eating urinal.
2. "Ra" from *StarGate* hocking chalky breath mints at .25 a pop.
1. That guy in the supply closet who looks like Alan Moore and won't stop giggling.

C.B.I.Q. ANSWERS

FROM PAGE 112

1. C	6. B	11. D	16. D
2. A	7. B	12. D	17. D
3. C	8. B	13. C	18. B
4. C	9. C	14. C	19. A
5. D	10. A	15. B	20. D

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WIZARD: THE GUIDE TO COMICS volume one, fifty-two (52), December 1995.
Please direct all inquiries concerning editorial information to Wizard Editorial Dept., 151 Wells Avenue, Congers, NY 10920-2064 (or Fax: (914) 268-0053). Please direct all inquiries concerning subscription information to Wizard Subscription Dept., 151 Wells Avenue, Congers, NY 10920-2064. One-year subscription rate is $29.95, Canada and Mexico $48.00, and all other countries $70.00. All payments in U.S. funds only.
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WIZARD: THE GUIDE TO COMICS (ISSN 1065-6499) is published monthly for $29.95 per year by Gareb Shamus Enterprises Inc., D.B.A. Wizard Press, 151 Wells Avenue, Congers, NY 10920-2064. Second-class postage paid at Congers, NY and additional mailing offices. **Postmaster:** Send address changes to **WIZARD PRESS**, PO Box 656, Yorktown Heights, NY 10598.
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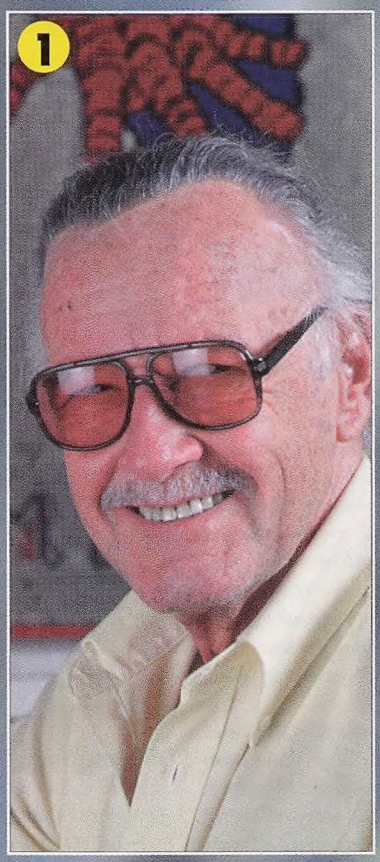
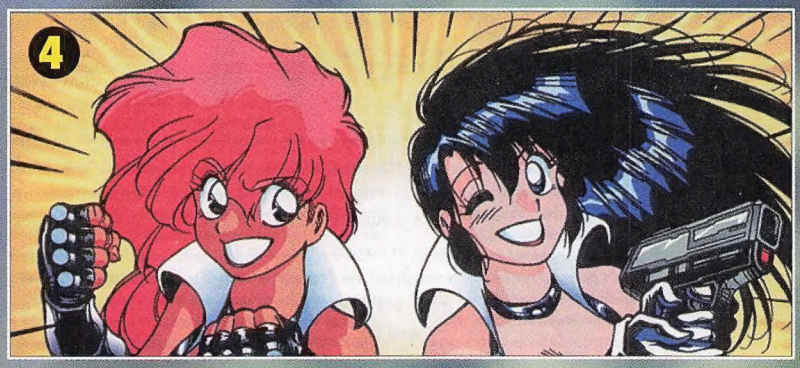




1. Excelsior!
Go toe-to-toe with the man who co-created the Marvel Universe. Stan Lee speaks candidly on the early days of Marvel, the creation of legends and the state of the industry today.

2. Endangered Species
Has the superstar artist disappeared in the comic book industry? An investigative report on how the superstars that once dominated this industry seem to be fading, with no new faces coming up to bat.

3. '95 Recap
1996 is right around the corner, but before we usher in the new Baby New Year, *Wizard* takes an in-depth look back at 1995 and recounts the key events that made it a year to remember.

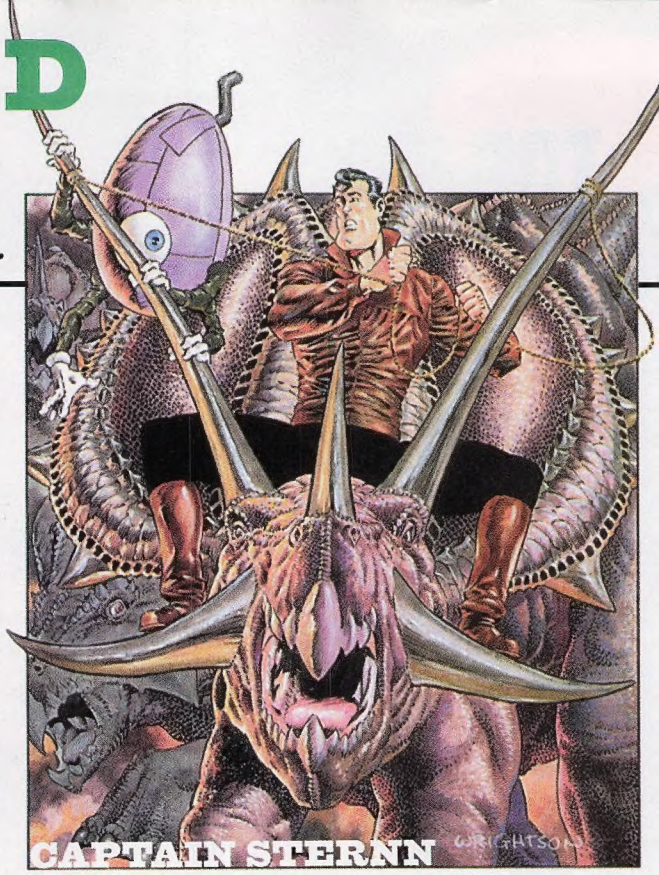
4. American Manga
Has the Japanese style of comic-making had any influence on American comics? You bet your butt! Come along for the ride as we explore where your favorite comics may be headed.

Wizard #53
Giant Year-End Issue!
On sale in November

WIZARD profile

Here's looking at...

BERNIE WRIGHTSON



Bernie Wrightson is like a lot of other people in this business. He started something and never finished it. "I took the Famous Artists Correspondence Course," he laughs, but I got about a third of the way through it, started getting work and never went back and finished it."

Wrightson's roadblock to a Famous Artists' sheepskin has been a wide variety of successes like *Swamp Thing*, *Frankenstein* and *Batman: The Cult*. But the 47-year-old Wrightson is a realist and is quick to balance his comic book wins with candid losses. "I've kind of fallen off the tracks more times than I'd like to admit. You have to make a living and you can't always get the ideal project. I've only been happy with about half of the *Swamp Things* I've done, and taking on The Punisher [*Punisher: P.O.V.*] was a real pain in the ass. But more often than not, I've been happy with what I've been doing."

Wrightson, born and raised in Baltimore, Md., was a scary kid when it came to his comic book preference. "I would go down to the corner candy store and spend the afternoon reading horror. There was a lot of horror at the time and I ended up weeding through all the crap and got to the good ones which were the ECs."

Photo by J. Schuyler

Wrightson took his act to a New York comic book convention in 1968 where his "armful of stuff" came to the attention of pros Al Williamson and Dick Giordano. "They saw some promise in what I showed them and said, 'If you lived in New York you'd have work in comics.' That was good enough for me. I packed a U-Haul trailer and moved to New York."

And DC Comics promptly gave him his first big league assignment. "They immediately started me on *Nightmaster*," he recalls. "I was this green kid from the South and they gave me my own comic book. I just froze up on the book and it was the stiffest, most dreadful stuff you'd ever want to see. So they yanked me off that book and put me on three-page fillers for *House of Mystery*."

Wrightson went on to be involved in an almost non-stop ride of prestige books including *House of Mystery* #92 (which introduced Swamp Thing), *Batman: The Cult* and the Warren stable of *Creepy*, *Eerie* and *Vampirella*. His character Captain Sternn made an appearance in the movie *Heavy Metal* before getting a mini-series courtesy of Kitchen Sink Press.

The artist is currently working on a two-part Alien story for *Dark Horse Presents* #101-#102 and next year's two-part Batman/Aliens crossover. He continues to be considered, by many in the industry, the consummate pro. Wrightson tends to take those kinds of compliments in stride.

"I like to think of myself as a pro," he chuckles. "But whether I am or not depends on who you talk to."

by Marc Shapiro

First comic read...

It had to be one of the ECs—*Haunt of Fear* or *Vault of Horror*.

Favorite comic of all time...

Haunt of Fear #27. I kept that book under my mattress for a year and a half.

Favorite work of your own...

I can't really say. I like a lot of different things I've done for a lot of different reasons.

Comics you currently read...

None at all. My eyes are too bad.

Favorite comic book character...

Batman, because he's the only human guy.

The one person you'd like to meet...

[EC horror artist] Graham Ingalls

Superpower you would most want...

It's not really a superpower but I would like to be able to time travel.

Nicknames you have...

None and I'm not looking for any.

Favorite munchie at 2 a.m....

Doritos

Things you collect...

I'm not really a collector but I do tend to accumulate a lot of things.

Favorite pastime or hobby...

Vegging out in front of the TV

Favorite cartoon...

All the Warner Bros. stuff

Last good book you read...

The Hot Zone by Richard Preston

Last good movie you saw...

I can't remember.

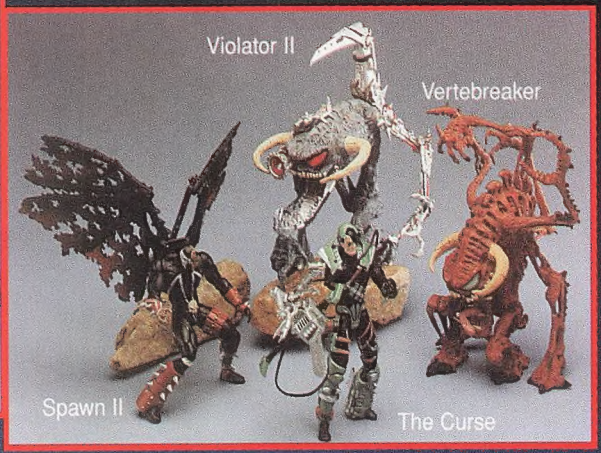
Person who would play you in a movie about yourself...

Tommy Lee Jones

If you had the power of the Beyonder...

I'd ask for the power to think about it some more. W

THE TOYS ARE HERE



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